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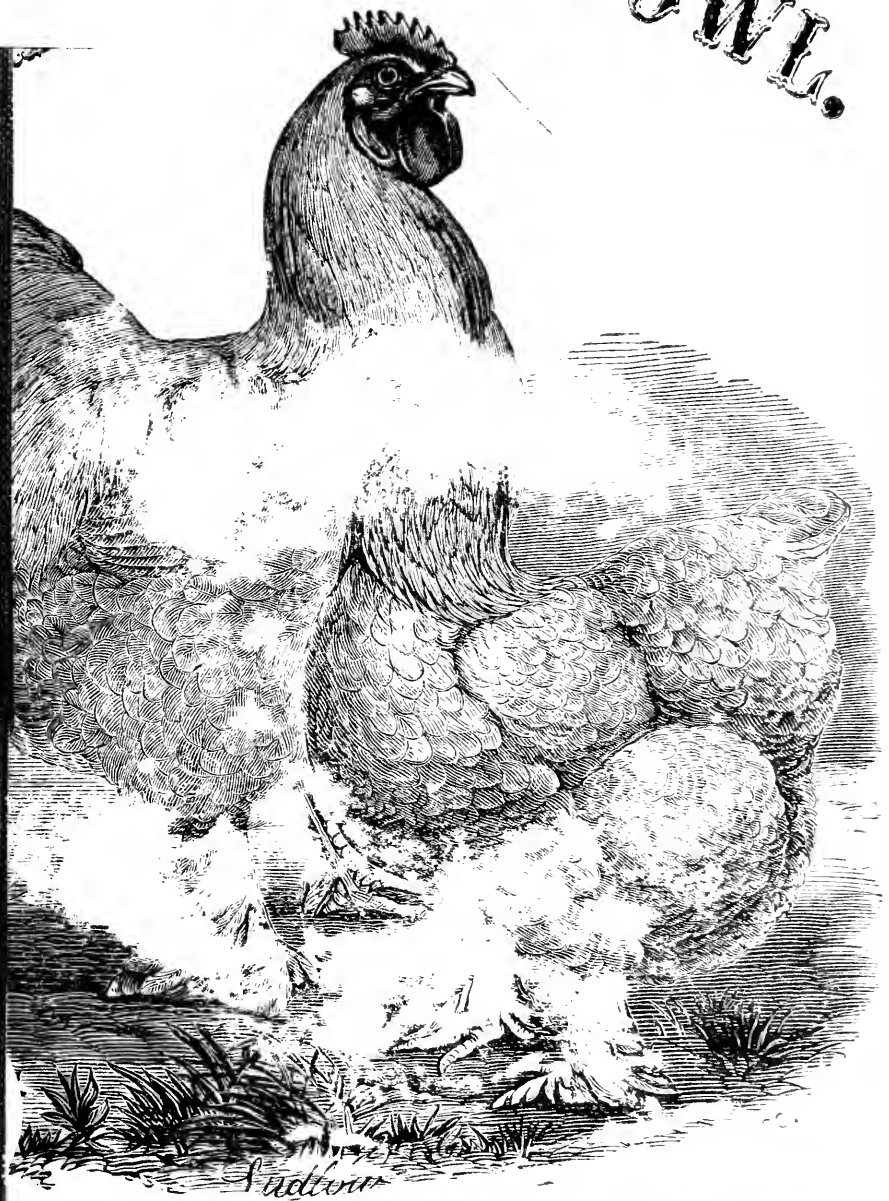
HINA FOWL.



ANGHAE, COCHIN, AND "BRAHMA."

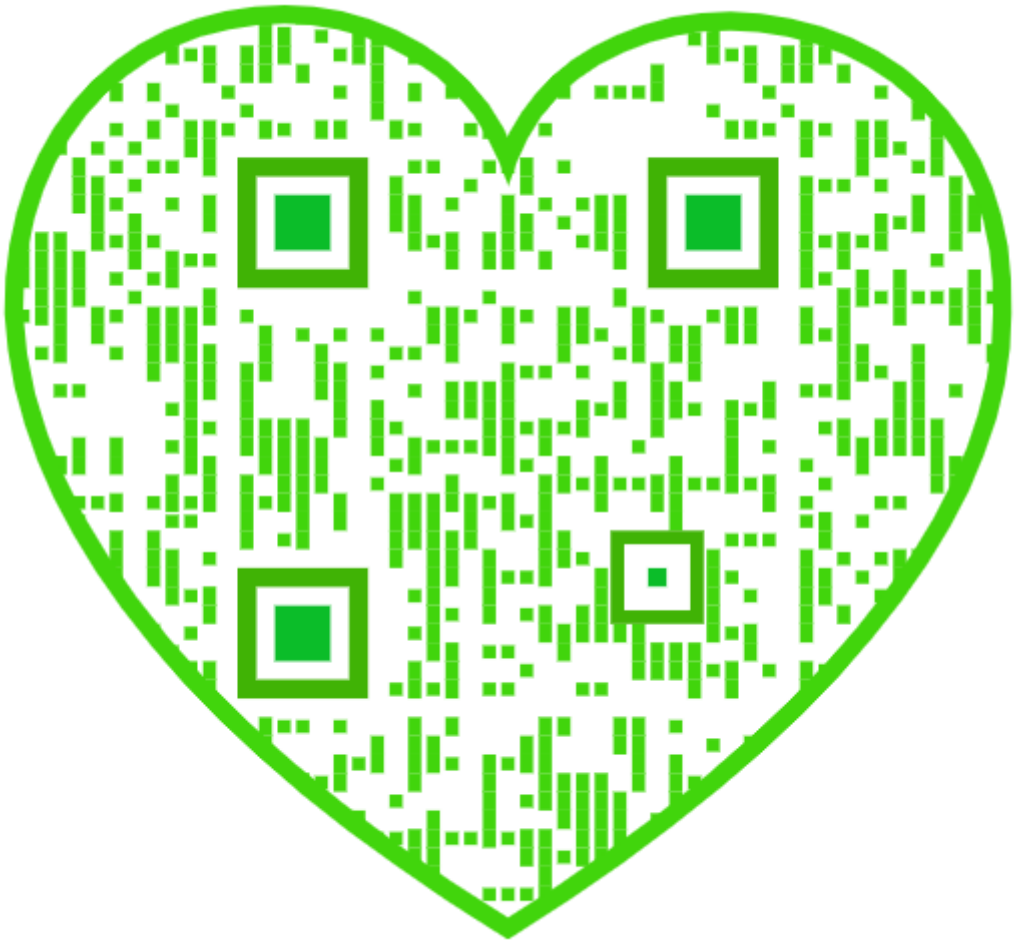
By GEO. P. BURNHAM,

THE "NEW ENGLAND POULTRY BREEDER," "A HUMOROUS RECORD OF THE HEN FEVER," "BURNHAM'S NEW POULTRY BOOK," ETC.

With Forty Illustrations of the Species.

MELROSE, MASS.

1874.



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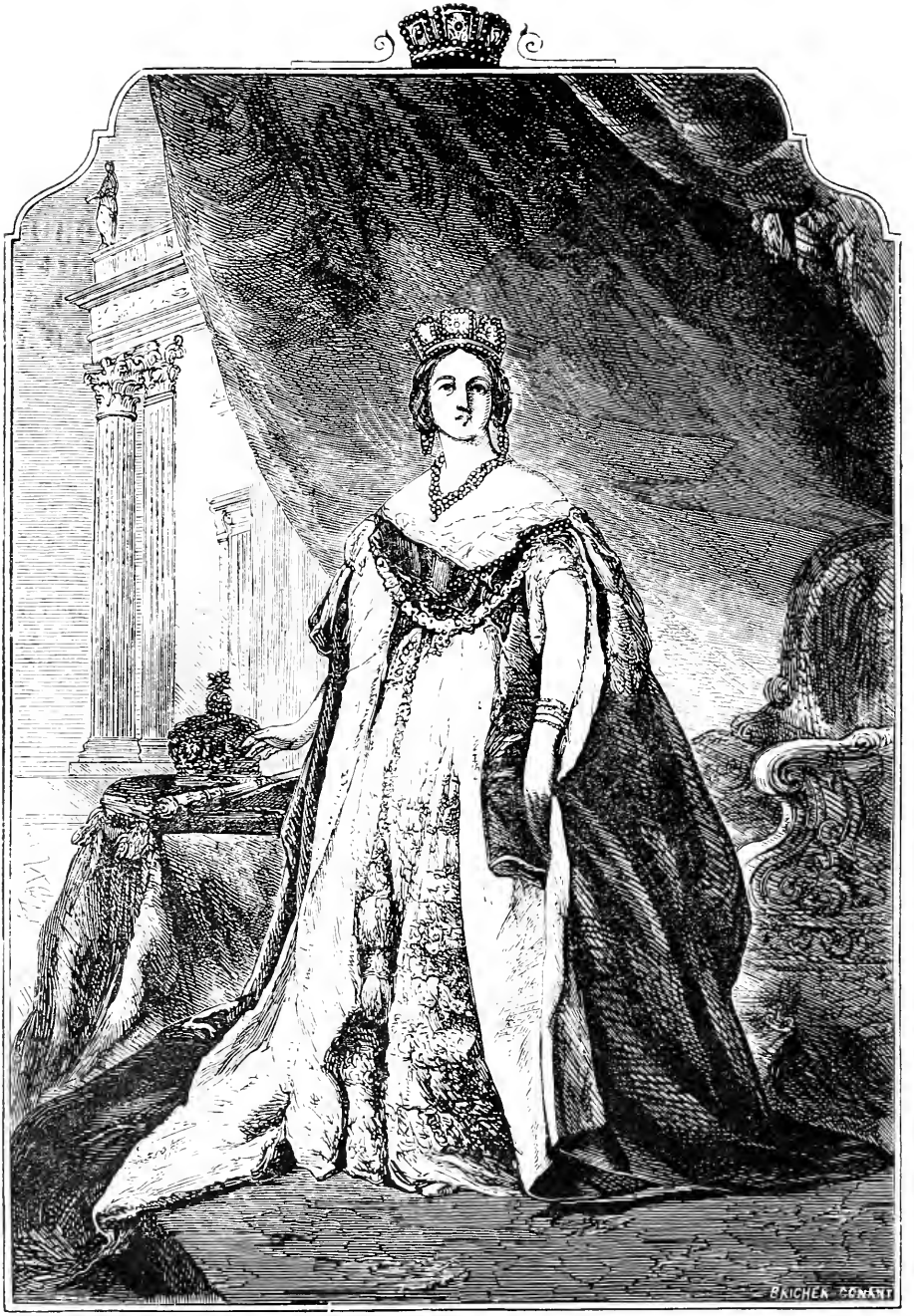


Painted by F. Winterhalter.

H. M. G. Majesty, Victoria, Queen of Great Britain,

IN THE ROBES OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER.

ENGRAVED BY BRICHER & CONANT, BOSTON.

Photographed from the Portrait in possession of Geo. P. Burnham;

PRESENTED TO HIM BY HER MAJESTY, THE QUEEN, IN 1853.

THE

CHINA FOWL.

SHANGHAE, COCHIN,

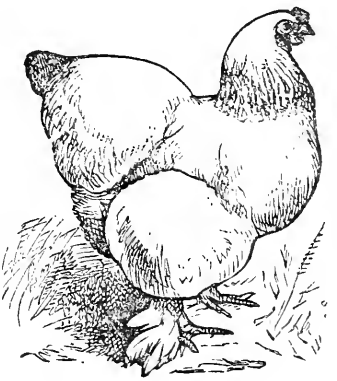
AND

"BRAHMA."

By GEO. P. BURNHAM,

AUTHOR OF

"NEW-ENGLAND POULTRY BREEDER," A HUMOROUS "HISTORY OF THE HEN FEVER," "BURNHAM'S NEW POULTRY BOOK," ETC.



With Forty Choice Illustrations.

MELROSE, MASS.

1874.

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PREFACE.

THIS volume is written with two specific purposes in view: first, to give a brief and succinct account, as far as the record permits, of the introduction into America of the *Chinese* varieties of domestic fowls, subsequently to the appearance of this notable race of poultry in England (in 1843–44); and secondly, to correct the numerous errors and false theories that have obtained, both in this country and in Great Britain, touching the origin and establishment of the most noted of modern gallinaceous breeds, first known on both sides of the Atlantic, as the reliable records show, to wit, the "GRAY SHANGHAES;" or, as they are latterly denominated by common consent, the Light and Dark "BRAHMA" fowls.

That these latter-mentioned birds descend direct from the *Chinese*, and not from any India race, is perfectly clear; since, as W. B. Tegetmeier, F.Z.S., correctly stated in 1853, "there is not a particle of evidence to show that (what is now called) the Brahma fowls ever came from *India*." And Mr. Tegetmeier truthfully added also at that early day, that "they originated *not* in India, but in America."

Lewis Wright of London, however, who has contributed no inconsiderable amount of interesting matter to the poultry literature of modern times, most singularly and ignorantly persists, in his later volumes, upon the idea that the Brahmas are of East India origin; and that the account given by Mr. Virgil Cornish, of an early pair of large gray fowls having been "imported into New York from Luckipoor, up the Brahmapootra River," furnishes the correct theory as to the origin of this variety.

This silly sailor-Cornish-Chamberlin story (which for a time was believed in by some persons), upon which Lewis Wright of England bases his utterly groundless notions, was many years ago absolutely exploded. Mr. Cornish *first* wrote (March 2, 1852,) that he procured his stock of Mr. Chamberlin of Connecticut, who was said through "a sailor" to have chanced upon "a pair of large, light-gray fowls, which said Chamberlin *first* brought into the State of

Connecticut, from somewhere, in the early part of the year 1849." Upwards of sixteen years *after* this original account of Cornish had been published, this same authority, over his own signature, in a *second* letter, to a Mr. We.d, just as clearly states that this very Chamberlin "pair of gray fowls arrived at New York on board a ship from Luckipoor in India, in September, 1846;" of which two statements, Mr. Plaisted, in 1874, declares "there is nothing accurate in the first, and the last one is still worse!"

And this is *all* the evidence the world has ever had about the introduction of this remarkable pair of Chamberlin gray birds, "imported from India," *viâ* New York, into Connecticut, an event which, beyond cavil or dispute, never thus occurred at all; since the fact is now established, beyond question or refutation, that neither in the year 1849 *or* 1846 (according to Cornish, Wright, *et als.*, or in 1847, as a later writer has it) did there arrive at New York *any* ship or other vessel "from the port of Luckipoor in India;" as will be clearly demonstrated in the succeeding pages of this work

At the same time, I shall endeavor to plainly show, herein, from the long-since-printed testimony and records, that the large light "*Gray Shanghaes*" bred by the undersigned for many years after 1849, were from *China* stock; and that *from these* (imported by me in 1849–'50 from Shanghae) came the *originals* of the now famous so-called "BRAHMAS."

I am indebted to Messrs. Lee & Shepard, publishers of Boston; to Jos. M Wade, Esq., of "Fanciers' Journal," Philadelphia, Penn.; to H. H. Stoddard, Esq., of "Poultry World," Hartford, Conn.; T. S. Cooper, Esq., of Coopersburg, Penn.; Philander Williams, Esq., of Taunton, Mass.; Dr. Kenegy of "Polo Argus," Ill.; T. T. Bacheller, Esq., of "N.W. Poultry Journal," Minneapolis; W. H. Todd, Esq., Vermillion, O.; and other gentlemen — for some of the fine illustrations in this work. And to these and various publicly unnamed friends, I hereby tender my acknowledgments for hints and suggestions that are embodied in my present book, which is now presented to the fanciers of America as a truthful and explicit account of what the author knows regarding the origin, history, characteristics, and breeding qualities of the CHINA FOWL, — *Shanghae, Cochin,* and *Brahma,* — from 1844 to 1874 inclusive; accompanied with corroborative authority for the statements I now make, gathered from the most reliable data I have been able to reach or make myself acquainted with, during the thirty years I have enjoyed so large a practical experience with all the varieties of this now universally favorite race of *Chinese* fowls.

GEO. P. BURNHAM.

MELROSE, MASS., September, 1874.

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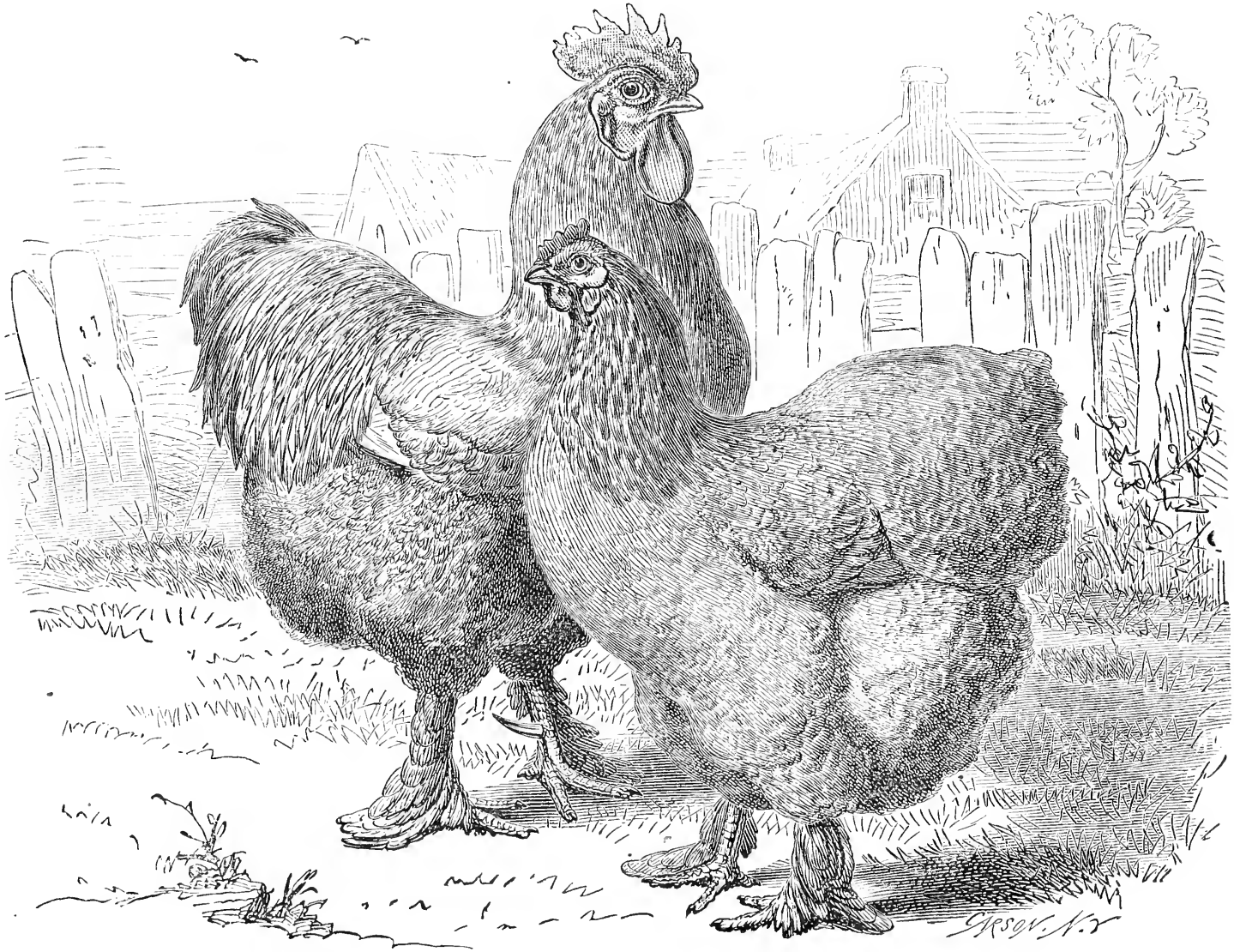
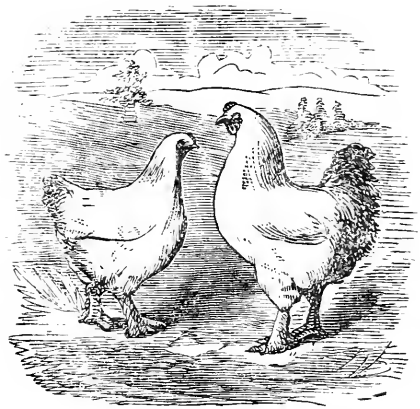


IMPORTED PARTRIDGE COCHINS "JEWETT" AND "LADY JANE." BELONGING TO T. S. COOPER, COOPERSBURG, PA.



THE CHINA FOWL:

SHANGHAE, COCHIN, "BRAHMA."

UNDER this general appellation, I include *all* the various-colored domestic fowls now popularly known in England and America as "*Shanghaes*," "*Cochins*," or "*Brahmas*;" to wit, the white, gray, lemon, buff, cinnamon, brown, partridge, grouse, and black, — feathered-legged or smooth-shanked. And in this volume I shall show that ALL these varieties, under whatever *name* during the last thirty years they may have been denominated, or at the present time are called, have one common origin; that *no* "importation" of any one of said varieties or strains have reached this country or Great Britain from any place save *Chinese* ports; and especially that none of these fine fowls have been brought, or can be authoritatively shown ever to have come, into the two countries mentioned, either from the province of *Cochin China*, originally, or more especially from *India*, in a single instance.

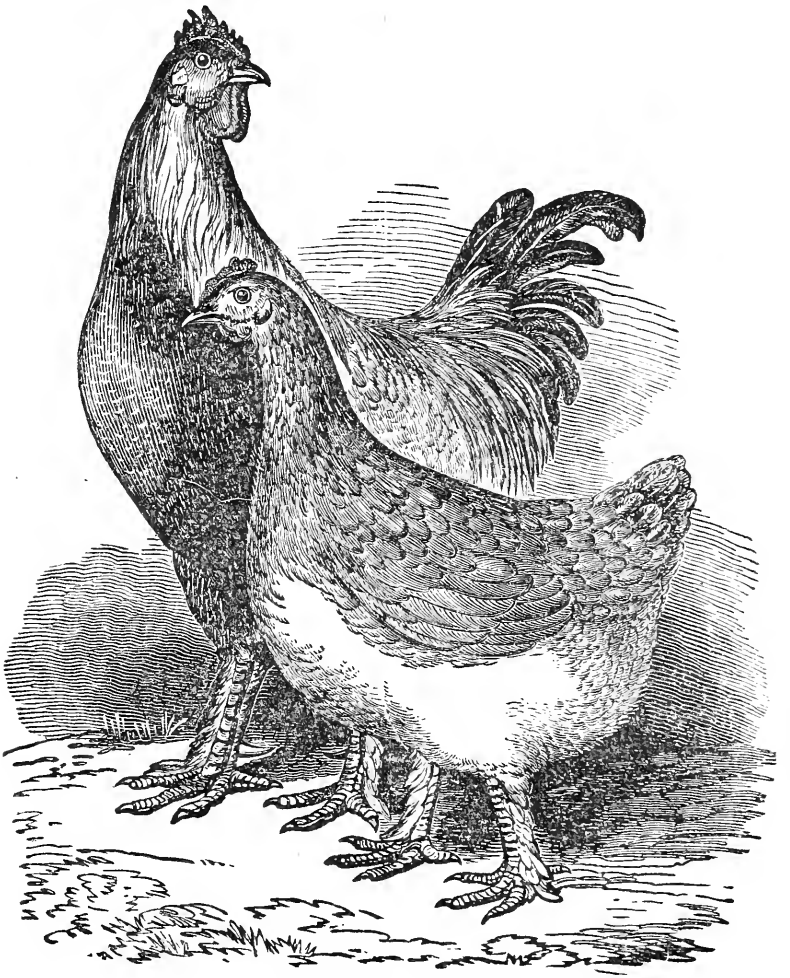
This averment at the outset, I make understandingly. Premising that I shall not unduly urge upon the attention of the readers of this work any

theory or standpoint of my own, particularly, I will add that I intend, nevertheless, to support this position by the production of ample corroborative recorded *facts* regarding the history and origin of these several different varieties, giving dates, the names of the early known owners and importers of each kind, as I find such records publicly made, — and the authorities I adduce herein can be consulted, as I have consulted them, upon reference to the sources quoted, from which I have gathered the information in this book, — set down with the view to make it so clear and plain that "he who runs may read" and comprehend my present history of this much-abused as well as greatly-lauded race of poultry.

The Malay fowl, the Java, the Calcutta, and the Chittagong — all introduced into America or England, first or last, in the past forty or fifty years — have long been known to old writers, and the earlier breeders; ship-masters having not infrequently brought home in their vessels specimens of *these* birds, upon their return voyages from the "East Indies." And these "Asiatic" samples have been confounded, in the *memories* of some of these "old salts," with the Chinese birds more recently imported, of which latter *only* I propose to write in these pages. From the similarity in size, form, and certain general characteristics common to all these Eastern varieties, this error on the part of mariners is not to be wondered at. But I do not intend to enlarge upon the merits or demerits of the India, Kulm, Java, Ceylon, Malay, Calcutta, or Chittagong varieties; and I set down this paragraph just here, simply to advise the reader, in advance, that my present volume will be devoted strictly to the consideration of the race comprised in the leading title of this work; namely, THE CHINA FOWL.

This bird has been found to be single-combed and pea-combed; it is smooth-limbed, and feathered upon the legs; it is short-legged and long-shanked; it is bred of all colors, from pure white to dead black; it is found, at times, long-bodied, stout and rangy in form, — or oftenest, compactly built, broad-backed, full-breasted, and shapely; its proportions are massive and commanding, and the better strains are comely, though inclining to a heavy or clumsy exterior: yet in all, and over all, it has come to be esteemed a general favorite everywhere, in some one or more of its different colors and shapes. And it is safe to assert that *no* domestic fowl the world has ever yet produced can excel this race in the admiration of a majority of the breeders and fanciers of the present day.

Upon page 10, for example, will be found an excellent illustration of a pair of thorough-bred China fowls, a cock and hen of the now so-called "Partridge Cochins." This pair of fowls are true representatives of the Chinese



YOUNG COCK AND PULLET; EARLY CHINA FOWLS.

race generally; and the artistic drawing mentioned is one of the most accurate I have ever met with. Without entering at present upon the qualities of this particular pair of birds (which are life-like representations of two

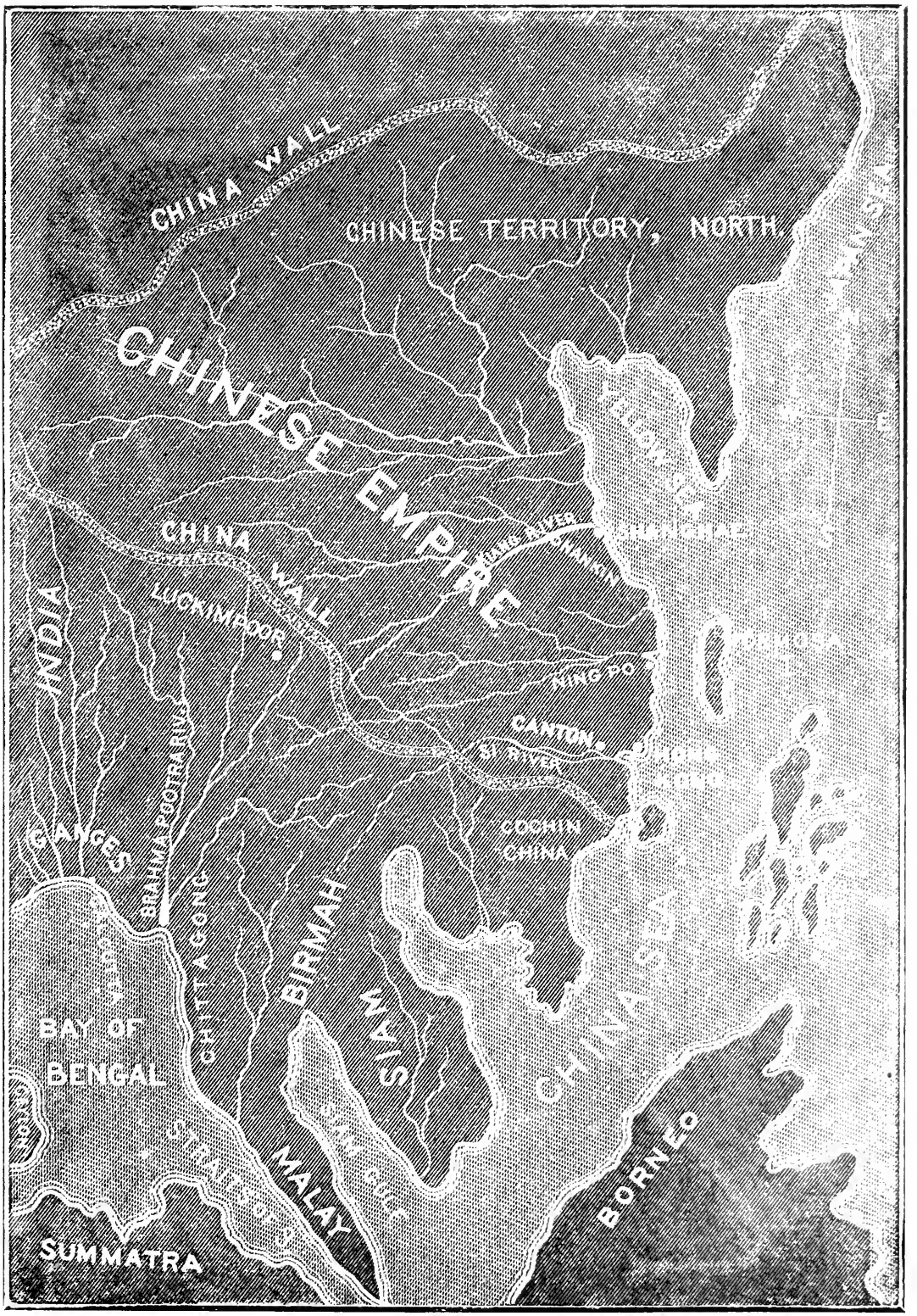
specimens imported by T. S. Cooper, Esq., of Coopersburg, Penn., from England, lately), we will only say here that we point to that portraiture as a very perfect delineation of the *naturally*-formed better than ordinary type of pure Chinese poultry, whose characteristics, in their original condition, we will now describe in detail, as *our* long experience with this race has taught us to see the genuine Shanghae stock in America.

We write the term *Shanghae* here advisedly, for the simple reason that almost all the known importations of these notable fowls came into the United States originally from the port of Shanghae, China, and for years were thus denominated. One or two importations have also been made, within the last three decades, by ships arriving from Canton or Hong Kong, which will be duly referred to hereafter.

These two last-mentioned places are Chinese ports also, situate on the easterly coast of the Chinese Empire, about six hundred miles south of the city of Shanghae, which lies in latitude 31° north, upon the Yellow Sea. Upon the opposite page we present a map of the localities we shall have occasion to refer to in this volume. This drawing is an accurate tracing of the outline boundaries of the countries mentioned, taken from Johnson's and Ward's "New Illustrated Atlas," revised and published in 1865.

By consulting this map, the reader will observe that the empire of *China* is far distant from the territory of *India*, even in "a bee-line;" while to double the low-running peninsula of Malay, sailing vessels from the coast of China to Calcutta have an immense distance to pass over, — say from Shanghae to the mouth of the Ganges, — not less, at the shortest, than rising four thousand miles.

The cities of Shanghae, north, on the coast; Nanking, up the Kiang River; Ning Po, on the coast; Hong Kong, south; and Canton, up the Si River (near the last place), are all Chinese ports, accessible to American and British commerce. But the leading ports whence sail our ships trading with the extreme East are Shanghae, Hong Kong, and Canton, — since the close of the Chinese war with Great Britain, in 1843; the first of these three (Shanghae) being the *principal* point of destination and departure of vessels belonging to "foreign" countries, trading with the Celestials upon their sea-coast territory.



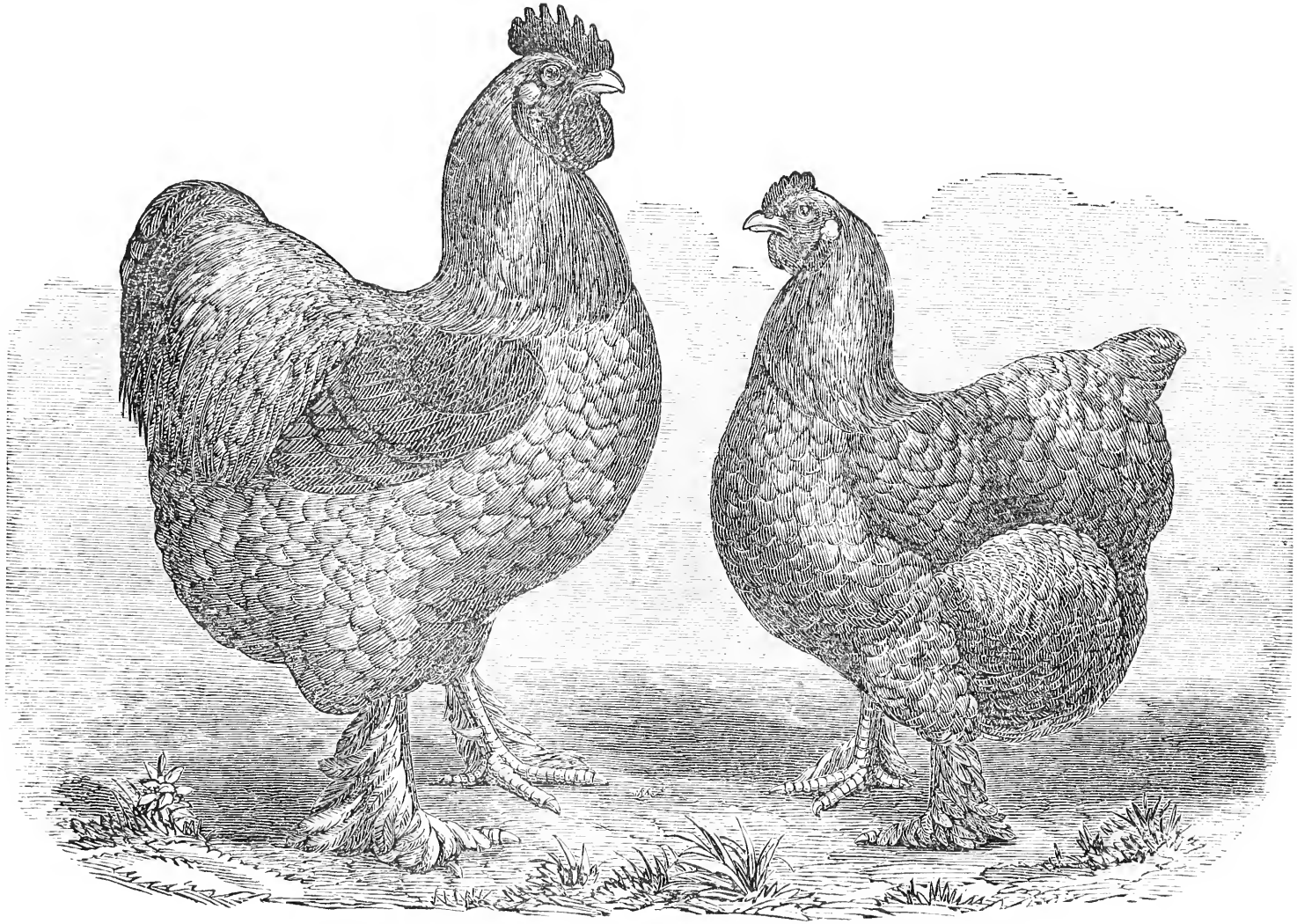
OUTLINE MAP OF CHINA, COCHIN CHINA, EAST INDIA, etc.

It may be deemed an easy matter to "import" direct from China a few native domestic fowls, that are worth taking off the deck of a returning Indiaman into an American port, after its six or eight months' voyage from Chinese seas. But those who have tried to compass this seemingly trivial manœuvre, in past years, have found it a very difficult feat to accomplish satisfactorily, so far as *my* knowledge of this undertaking goes.

I have individually attempted this seven or eight times, and never succeeded but *once* in the endeavor to get from China direct, to my own order, a dozen Shanghae fowls; and of these, when the consignment reached Central Wharf, Boston (to purchase which I had placed in the ship's first officer's hands one hundred Spanish-milled dollars, when he sailed from Boston), there were but just three fowls, a cock and two hens, that I cared to take home, of the fourteen birds he brought me from Shanghae; and which he positively assured me were all there were left alive upon coming into home port, out of sixty-five chickens he placed on ship-board when he sailed from Shanghae, seven months previously. The others died, he said, on the passage back. Far more likely, no doubt, was it, that they went one after another, when wanted, into the cook's pot for the captain's dinners, — especially the largest and most desirable.

The difficulty in consummating this sort of enterprise is principally twofold, thus: As can well be understood, the mass of gentlemen or businessmen who go from the West to China possess neither the taste, the knowledge, or the inclination to concern themselves about looking up *poultry* in that far-away land. They do not go there for this purpose, and commonly think they have a far more "dignified" object in their journeys thither. Secondly, the ship-masters and sailors who go there, know little or nothing of poultry (except to eat it when cooked), and care less about this subject, which home-fanciers are, to a greater or less degree, so interested in. Thus the latter class never trouble themselves to secure any particular style, shape, color, or sized fowl, when they put on board their vessels a few chickens, to be used merely as food for the captain's cabin table, usually, during a part or the whole of their return voyage.

It occasionally happens that *all* the chickens thus placed on ship-board in Shanghae, or other China ports, are *not* devoured or killed *en route* homeward. The remains of such shipments reach American or British ports,



A GOOD REPRESENTATION OF THE "BUFF COCHIN" (OR SHANGHAE) FOWL.

generally speaking, in a filthy, half-starved, vermin-infested, or roupy condition, — in consequence of their long confinement, and the neglect and hard weather they are subjected to while cooped up for months *en voyage*. And *these* are nine times in ten the fowls "imported from China direct" that we get both in America and England, or read of in the poultry and other journals of the day. It is not always thus, however, as I will show by and by. But this is the rule. The others are the exceptional cases.

Let me give a brief illustration upon this point. A near relative of my own, the master of a fine vessel from a leading American port, has been in command of a ship for the last twenty years, sailing between New York or New Bedford, and Shanghae or Canton, and Whampoa. At least seven or eight times within that period, when he has sailed from home, I have arranged with him, personally, to bring me out from China a few good fowls; which I supposed it would be no very difficult thing for him to accomplish. Two or three times he has brought back with him six or eight or ten birds, such as he could readily obtain while lying in port at Shanghae or Canton. But these proved most indifferent samples, compared with what I bred myself by hundreds in my own yards, and were of all colors and grades *except* the kinds I desired to obtain. Yet *he* thought them fine, and through personal friendship, in each instance, he did his level best to please me. I wouldn't give them yard-room, — the best of them! Yet these were really "imported Shanghaes," direct from Chinese territory.

Thus, I repeat it, it is *not* so simple a performance as most of us imagine it is, to get out from Celestial ports direct a consignment of *good* specimens of genuine Chinese domestic poultry. The merchants, travellers, and business men who go hence to that far-off country, care nothing about this "hobby" of their friends; while the mariners and ship-masters, whose lives are passed upon the seas only, know little or nothing of the "fine points" of these birds. So we have always been, and must continue to be, dependent upon the *chances* that occur now and then, to replenish our Chinese stock; and the opportunities to do this, *satisfactorily to experienced breeders*, are certainly but rare, at the best.

These chance opportunities occasionally occur, however. In my own experience two or three times, and in instances of the experience of others whom I will presently refer to, a few small clutches of excellent fowls, of

the genuine type and true stamp, as events have proven, have been obtained from China, or brought thence into America and England, of the *buff, drab, brown, light gray,* and *yellow ;* from which have been produced most of the finest Shanghaes (now called "Cochins" or "Brahmas") that have ever been seen or known in the world.

In the years of grace 1843–'44, I had in my possession a goodly quantity of domestic fowls, five or six hundred in number (which I had bred and gathered together during those years), upon leased premises, some few acres in area, located at the foot of Mt. Pleasant in Roxbury, Mass., known as "Williams' Garden," — a fine large estate, then belonging to the late Aaron D. Williams, now entirely covered over with handsome dwelling-houses.

I had bred fowls some years prior to this time, on a limited scale, but at this period was engaged in the then hopeful attempt to breed poultry to profit, within limited space, *in large numbers,* successfully, — an experiment which, I need hardly announce at this day, proved futile and ineffectual.

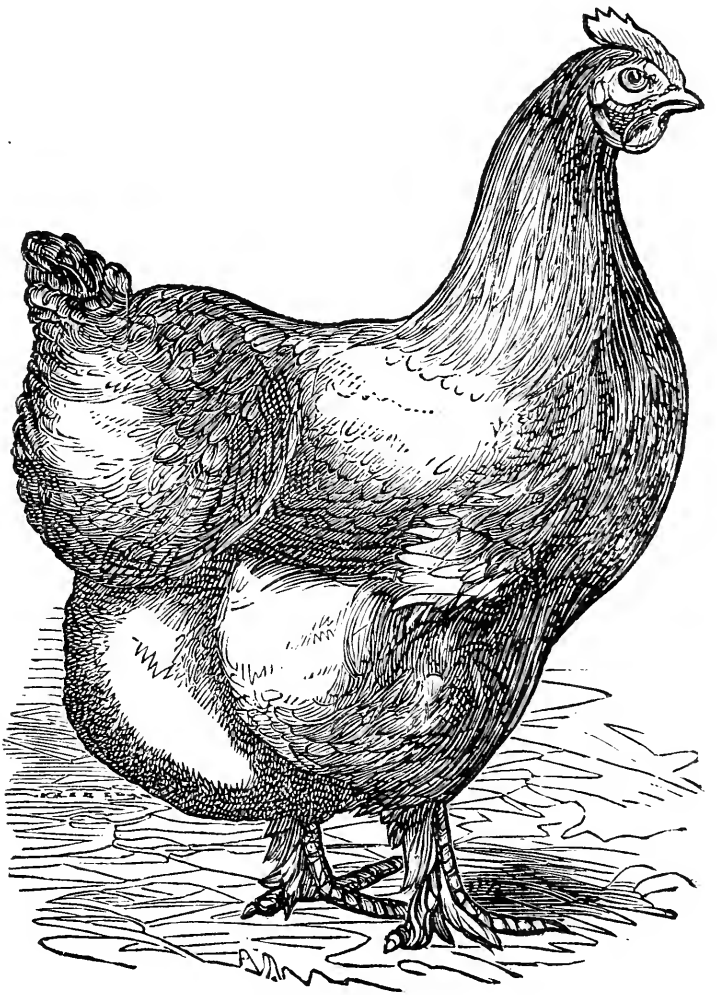
In 1846–'47 I removed to more retired quarters, and, with my flocks of poultry reduced to less than a hundred good birds, on an estate upon which I erected a cottage house, I went on more successfully. I resided upon Williams Street, Roxbury (now Shawmut Avenue extension), until late in 1849, when I purchased the place in Melrose, Mass., where I *now* live, and early in 1850 removed my greatly improved stock of fowls to this town ; where I have since resided, now a quarter of a century.

From 1848–'49 down to the present year (1874), for the most part I have constantly had the Chinese fowls upon my premises, in large or lesser quantities; and my long experience with this race has afforded me ample opportunity to judge of their good quality, and to make myself — through almost numberless practical experiments with them — thoroughly acquainted with their habits, their characteristics, their points, and their general qualities.

The China fowl is a good bird; and the fanciers of this country and Great Britain have shown their preference largely in favor of this breed, in some of its various colors, by cultivating and improving the size, and increasing the intrinsic value of this fowl, until the modernized "Brahma" or "Cochin," as it is at this time denominated, has come to be known deservedly as the most desirable of all the poultry we have among us.

Other breeders of course have their favorites, and justly so. But the

majority of fanciers prefer some of the varieties of the Chinese fowl. And the "Brahmas" or the "Cochins" — all of which come from *Shanghae* originally, as we shall see — now lead the van in the estimation of the mass of American or English breeders.



AN EARLY-IMPORTED CHINA HEN.

The two illustrations preceding portray the shape and general forms of an *early*-imported cock and hen of the Chinese race. They are neither so comely or so attractive in shape or features as are those subsequently

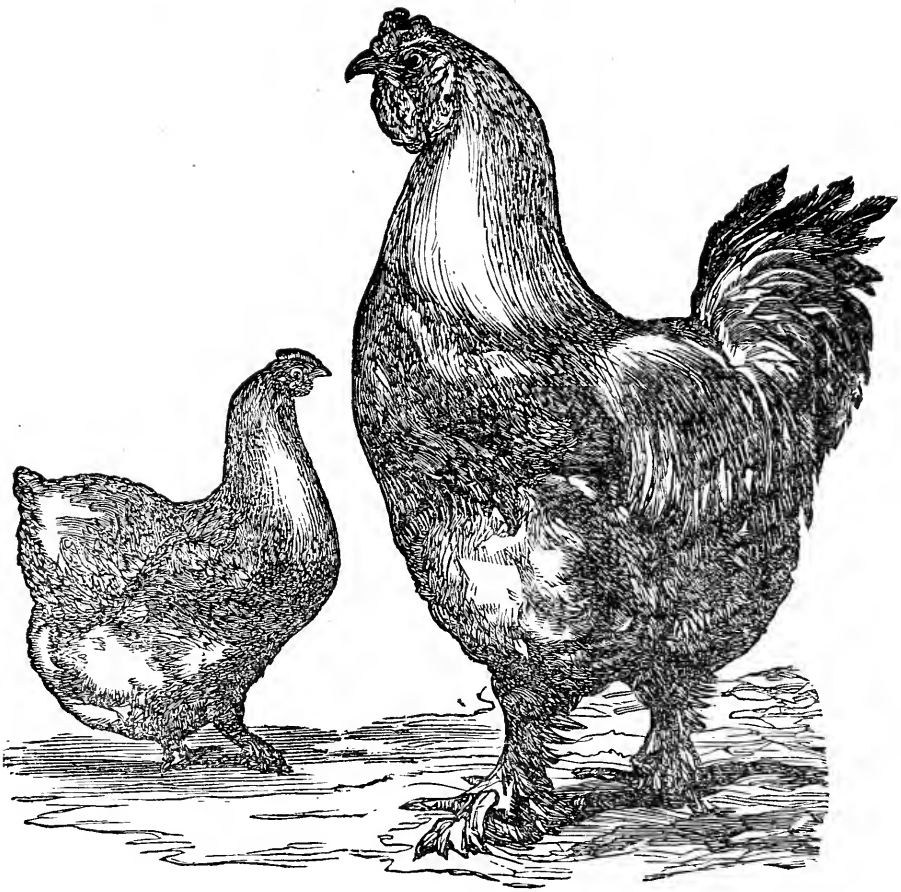
received, or which were bred from the first stock had in America. Both of these are coarse, ungainly, and dumpy. But we give these drawings of original birds here, for comparison with the "improved" samples of the race to be found in these pages farther on.

From the evidence at hand, however, it is very clear, whatever may be the theory of one or two late writers upon this subject, that all our large, fine, so-called "Asiatic varieties" of domesticated fowls belong to but *one* race, of whatever color we breed them; and the entire testimony in modern works on poultry goes directly to this point, as to the origin whence they come into our hands, in *every* instance. And that origin is *China.*

I am not now speaking of any of the still coarser grades of the Malay species, the Javas, or even the Chittagongs, about which early authors used to write so fluently without knowing any details as to the nativity of this style of bird, except what they casually learned from some stray sailor, who was not to be easily disputed, perhaps, in whatever yarn he might choose to spin regarding the birds he brought home accidentally "from the E-Stingies." But my present pages will comprise a monograph of the *Chinese* fowl; whence I proceed to show descend *all* the pure "Cochins" and "Brahmas," of every shade we possess to-day, either in England or the United States.

In Great Britain, since the advent of the Queen's famous so-called "Cochin Chinas," and more especially within the past twelve or fifteen years, perhaps, the old China fowl has been manifestly improved, by careful mating and judicious breeding, in the hands of the experienced fanciers who have long maintained their ascendency over us in America, in a general way, in their treatment of poultry, as we all very well understand.

The "importations" made into the United States in late years come from *this* source principally; and very good fowls they send us too, as the majority of American importations of "Cochins," &c., of all colors, which have been since 1865–'66 received thence into the United States, and which are *now* arriving here every month, from some of the leading breeders in England, amply demonstrate; the different classes of which we now propose to describe in detail in the future pages of this volume, with the single additional remark, here, that the English style of breeding the China fowl (as evinced in the latest specimens of the Light and Dark "Brahmas" we have received thence) is *not* uniformly to American taste.



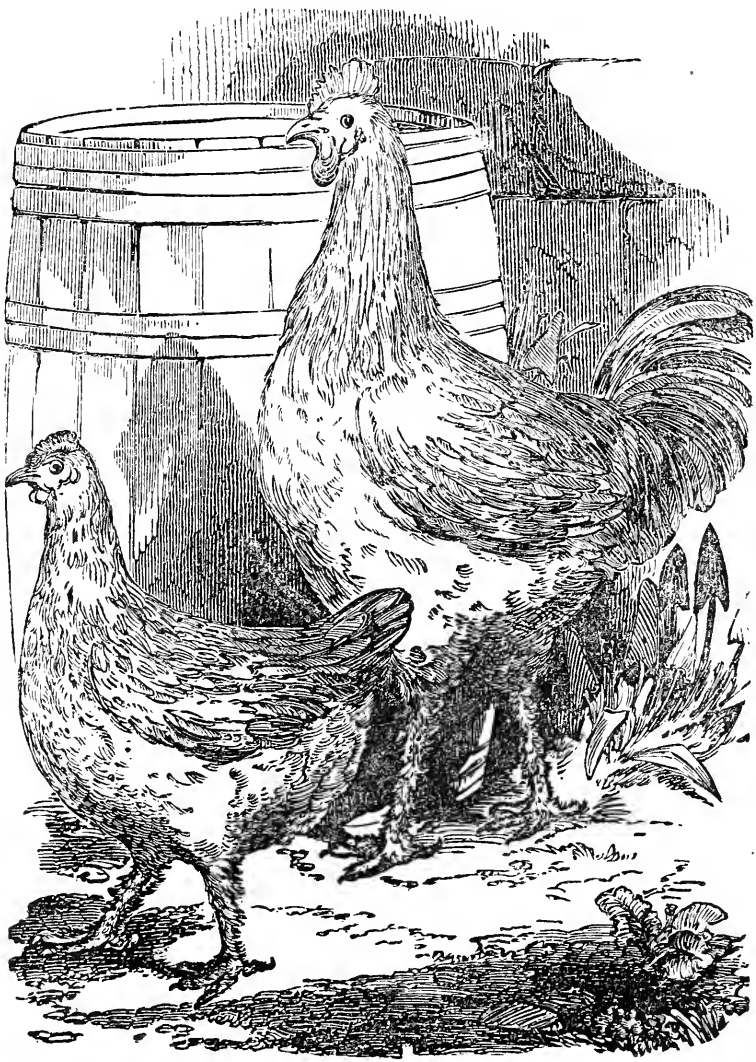
THE SHANGHAES.

THE *Shanghae* fowl, first brought from the Chinese port of that name, and thus called by the early possessors of those birds in England or America, usually with us upon this side of the Atlantic also, took the name of the importer or owner of such birds, in the early days; as, for example, in the instances of the Bailies', the Forbes', the Marsh, the Cushing, or the Burnham Shanghaes; which exact types of fowls are, however, in accordance with poultry society "Standard" rules at the present time, denominated "*Cochins*." Of the "Cochin Chinas" we shall speak at length in another chapter: we simply mention this "convertible term" here, in order that the reader of this volume may not confound the two names, as we proceed.

We will describe the old Shanghae fowl first, therefore, because through priority in date we received in America — in Salem, Mass., in Philadelphia,

Penn., at New York City, and elsewhere (so it has been frequently stated) — from *Shanghae*, China, the earliest consignments of this stock.

It has been said that as early as in 1843, such birds came both into Salem



PAIR OF YELLOW SHANGHAES — COCK AND PULLET. (1849.)

and Philadelphia, though I deem this announcement problematical. The well-known stock of Messrs. Sturgeon and Moody of England was received from China by those gentlemen in 1847, — so they inform us; and these were

among the very first accredited Shanghaes we heard of. They were certainly very early birds. Mr. Sturgeon writes to Mr. Tegetmeier of London that he got his fowls in 1847, from a ship in the West India docks. A clerk of his chanced to go on board, who, struck by the appearance of these extraordinary fowls, bought them, on his own responsibility, at what Mr. Sturgeon considered and denounced as a most extravagant price, — six or eight shillings (less than two dollars) each! A younger brother of Mr. Sturgeon's unwittingly killed two of the five birds on their arrival, leaving him but a cock and two pullets. He took little interest in them at that time; but he subsequently raised from *these* the finest buff Shanghaes ever produced in England. "*All* our birds," he adds, "came from Shanghae, and were feathered-legged."

It is stated by those who have observed the fact in Chinese ports, that the Shanghaes (or now so-called "Cochins") of all colors, are seen quite as frequently upon their native soil, *without* any feathering upon the shank below the hocks, as *with* this feature. But the style in this country is, to breed them heavily feathered upon the legs. The early importations spoken of were *all* feathered-legged, some strains showing this more markedly than others, though my own imported birds were thus generously feathered.

The *Marsh* Shanghaes, which comprised a dozen buff and partridge-colored specimens, were brought from the "Celestial domain" by the Rev. Mr. Marsh of West Roxbury, Mass., or they were sent to him direct, as early as in 1846, I think, or in 1847. These were a noble clutch of birds. They all had the heavy leg-feathering, and were genuine imported stock. They were not bred by him with any special care as to mating, for the producing of particular *colors* of chickens, at that early time, however; and Mr. Marsh, at first having but one cock, which was a superb light red and buff, bred him to all the hens promiscuously. The result was, that, though all the true characteristics of the China race were in a positive degree reproduced and maintained in the progeny, the color became uncertain and various, — from rich golden yellow to dark brown, with the intermediate shadings and markings of partridge and grouse-colored birds, first and last. They were large, well-formed, magnificent specimens of the China variety, nevertheless, and enjoyed for many years a reputation which subsequent importations did not interfere with, however fine they came.

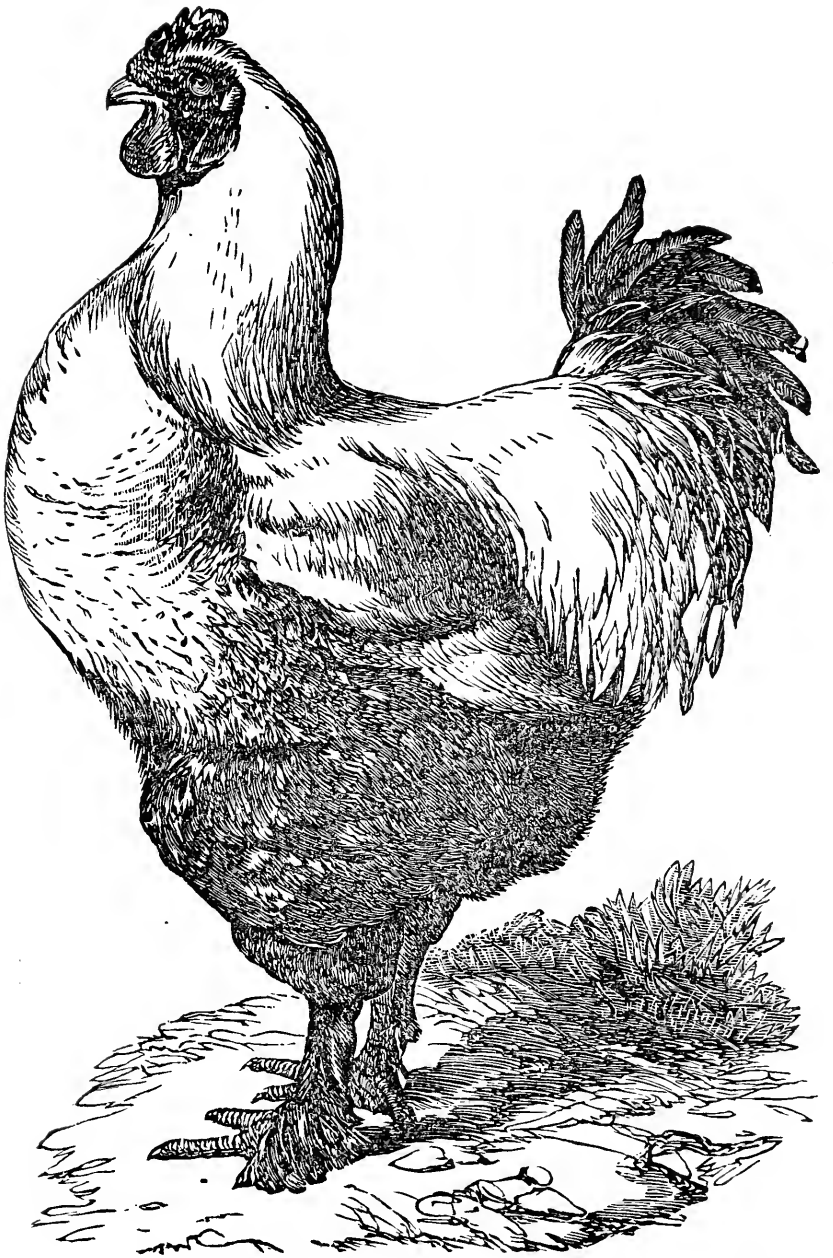
The *Forbes* Shanghaes came into Boston, direct from Shanghae also, in

the year 1848, — brought home by Capt. R. B. Forbes, after whom this strain was named. They were beautiful birds too, but of a peculiar tint in *color*. The hens were a pale drab, or silvery cinnamon hue, while the cock was of a light reddish dominique, or marbled tint; and for years after their arrival in America this importation bred, through generation after generation, drab pullets and light reddish dominique cocks, almost invariably. The Forbes fowls were frequently called "Yellow Shanghaes," in those days; but the color of the original birds was precisely what I have described it, and it was quite different from what we afterwards knew as the Yellow or Buff Shanghaes, — as in the cases of the Cushing importation at Kingston, Mass., and those of S. A. Drake, known as the Rev. Mr. Missionary Brown's stock. They bred the full-feathered leg uniformly, and for a long period enjoyed a deservedly high reputation as first-class stock, in all respects.

The *Cushing* importation also came into America from Shanghae. These were of a bright golden color, hens and cocks; the latter being the most brilliant, truly "flame-colored" cast of plumage I ever met with, in my experience with the Shanghae race. They ran out shortly, however, or were crossed with others, and were seen but for a year or two in their purity, when the old stock disappeared altogether, as did the Palmer, and Cope strains.

A general description given in 1849, 1850, of the best Shanghae fowls, will be found to closely correspond with the character of the birds at the present time universally called "Cochins," of which the drawing (page 23) is an admirable representation, but which name, as in the instance of "Brahma," in late years commonly given to the Gray Shanghaes, is a misnomer, as I shall show as we proceed; albeit there is no valid objection to the establishment of both these later cognomens, nevertheless, since it is the fashion now-a-days; and everybody assents to these changes from the original true title.

Their legs, in the early time, "were uniformly stout, usually of a bright reddish yellow, sometimes nearly flesh-colored; and, for the most part, the limbs below the hock were very heavily feathered. Their general plumage was of a brilliant yellow or gold-color, variegated and 'pencilled' with black, dark brown, or red. The tail was short and upright; body squarely formed; wings small and tucked up high; legs, when young, rather long for beauty; head full sized; comb single, upright, and serrated; feathers rather fine and downy than otherwise, — and, altogether, they were a large, fine, showy fowl, as then described by Bement, Dixon, Kerr, and Dr. Bennett."



GRAY SHANGHAE COCK; BURNHAM'S STOCK, 1852. (*Drawn by H. Weir.*)

The *Brown*, or Drake fowls, as they were more commonly called, came into Massachusetts from the city of Shanghae originally, in the year 1846. The

Rev. Mr. Brown was a missionary to China, as was Rev. C. B. Marsh, also, of West Roxbury, Mass. Mr. Brown resided in China some ten years, and thought his opportunity to select good birds was the best. He affirmed that the natives prized those he brought to America upon his return home, above all other varieties in that country; and they were very choice specimens for those days. The editor of "The Massachusetts Ploughman" wrote of these Brown's Shanghaes in 1849, "We saw some of these fine birds sold at the first Boston exhibition at as high as $13.00 the pair; and we were told that a few were sold for $18.00 a pair." At this early period these figures were considered enormous. Within four years from the time when this paragraph was written, a pair of my *Gray* Shanghaes, sent to England to John Baily, Esq., of London, were sold at the Birmingham Exhibition, after taking first prize there, for $500.00; and in that year, and subsequently, one to two hundred dollars for a pair of *good* Shanghaes was not an uncommon price.

The uniformity in the size of the *chickens* bred in America during the first few seasons after the introduction of the Shanghaes here, was very remarkable; and this alone established the fact that the stock was, beyond cavil, a distinct race of birds. The weights of adult specimens at that time did not average so great as has frequently been since attained by American fanciers quite generally. Seventeen to nineteen pounds per pair, cock and hen, at twelve months old, was formerly very fair and quite satisfactory. Hundreds of birds were raised whose weight per pair did not reach these figures, though it not infrequently happened, as time went by, to hear reports of "a big Shanghae cock" in the hands of Mr. A, B, C, or D, somewhere, that drew fourteen, fifteen, sixteen pounds alone. I never saw the fowl that would take down the steelyard at this latter weight, though others affirm — Lewis Wright among these vouchers for the marvellous — that "single cocks have been bred weighing over eighteen pounds; but this is not a common occurrence." I should say *not!*

The early Shanghaes, of all colors, were excellent layers. Hundreds of veritable instances could be quoted from the accounts constantly being published in the press during 1848 to 1855, of the extraordinary fertility of these hens. The Marsh, Forbes, and Burnham Shanghaes were notably good layers. The pullets commenced laying at six to seven months old generally, though many instances occurred of their beginning to lay at five or five and a half months. This is the fair average with the "Cochins" of to-day; and upon

this topic, in "The Massachusetts Ploughman" of 1849, I find an article of mine, contributed to that journal on this subject, which I reproduce here, that gives a very fair description of these fowls as I saw them more than twenty-five years since. The reader will perceive that the "Cochins" of our time are pretty accurately described in this extract, written by the author of this present volume a quarter of a century ago:—

"I am confident that the *Shanghae* fowls are confounded with the *Cochin Chinas;* and I think that some persons who have the stock, call both by this name. We have not had the Shanghaes in America long enough yet, nor is the distinction sufficiently well known, I imagine, to determine between the real Shanghae and the Cochin Chinas we now have here, and more commonly called by this last name. *I* make the distinction on the ground that my imported Shanghaes (and I have now three different varieties, from different sources) are *all* heavily feathered upon the legs, while my "Cochin China" fowls, which I consider possess all the good points that any specimens classed under that name do, have *no* feathers on the legs. The Shanghaes come from the extreme north of China, fifteen hundred miles up the coast. The 'Cochin Chinas,' now so called, it is said originated in a country of that name in a far more southerly latitude."

(These two locations can be seen upon reference to the map, on page 15.)

The *theory* we all held to at that early period was, in substance, that nature provided for the northern fowls, where the climate was coldest, this coating or leg-feathering as a protection to the elongated shanks of the Shanghaes; while the "Cochin Chinas" (represented in those years by the Queen's stock, thus *mis*named), it was said, came from this extreme southern province of Chinese territory, and did not need this feature in their formation. But all this was *merely* theory, and had no basis, as we shall see anon.

The article from which I quote (and which was deemed of sufficient importance at the time to be transferred entire to the pages of Dr. John C. Bennett's "Poultry Book," published in 1850–'51, by Phillips & Sampson, at Boston,) continues thus: "There are very few, if any, *bona fide* Shanghae fowls at present for sale in this region. Hundreds of so-called 'Shanghaes' are offered every week; but this breed is now altogether too rare, and the real 'Simon Pure' will readily command too high a price at private sale, for these genuine birds to be very common at present. The coming year there will be more of them. And for the farmer, the poulterer, the breeder, or the

fancier, I consider this fowl, in its purity, one of the most economical and most profitable of all the known *large* breeds extant."

Dr. Bennett's work, in 1850, is embellished with handsome illustrations, drawn from life, of my Shanghae fowls, of which the drawing on p. 24 is pretty accurate, though at that period it was difficult to find engravers who could so artistically portray our birds as do those who succeeded the earlier draughtsmen of domestic poultry.

From Dixon and Kerr's "Ornamental and Domestic Poultry Book," published in Philadelphia in 1850–'51, I extract the following account of my Shanghaes, imported in 1849, and communicated by me to that work: —

"From my own importations, last season, I have bred several very fine specimens of pure *Shanghaes*, uniform in color and characteristics, remarkably heavy for their ages — the cocks, at five to six months old, drawing eight and a half to nine pounds, and pullets of same age, five and a half to six and a half pounds each, live weight." . . . "They are short-legged, heavy-bodied, handsomely plumed, and among the best *layers* I have ever met with." . . . "I have never seen their equals for laying *early*. The Shanghaes commence to lay at six months old; they are very prolific, lay large eggs, and a great many of them." . . . "All things considered, they are certainly a very valuable species of domestic fowl, and I am highly pleased with them." . . . "I have now on the way, direct from Shanghae and Canton, two fresh lots, from which, *with* the stock I have now reserved, I shall breed another year. These last fowls were ordered by me a year ago." . . . "For all the purposes of a really *good* fowl, whether I speak of beauty of model, good size, or laying qualities, I deem the thorough-bred *Shanghaes* among the very best and generally most profitable of domestic birds."

This standard poultry book of that period describes the true *Shanghae* fowl imported and bred in those early years, 1847, '48, '49, '50, precisely to correspond in features with the so-called "*Cochins*" of to-day, in detail — from "single upright, serrated comb," to "heavily feathered legs down to the tips of toes." And the authors conclude their minute description of this fowl, then coming into general favor everywhere, as being "fully plumed with soft downy feathering, in size of great proportions, quiet and docile in temper, wonderful layers, making flesh rapidly from chickenhood, and we know not of a better. In truth, we may say of the Shanghae, as the pious Isaac Walton was wont to say of the trout, his favorite dish: 'God certainly might have

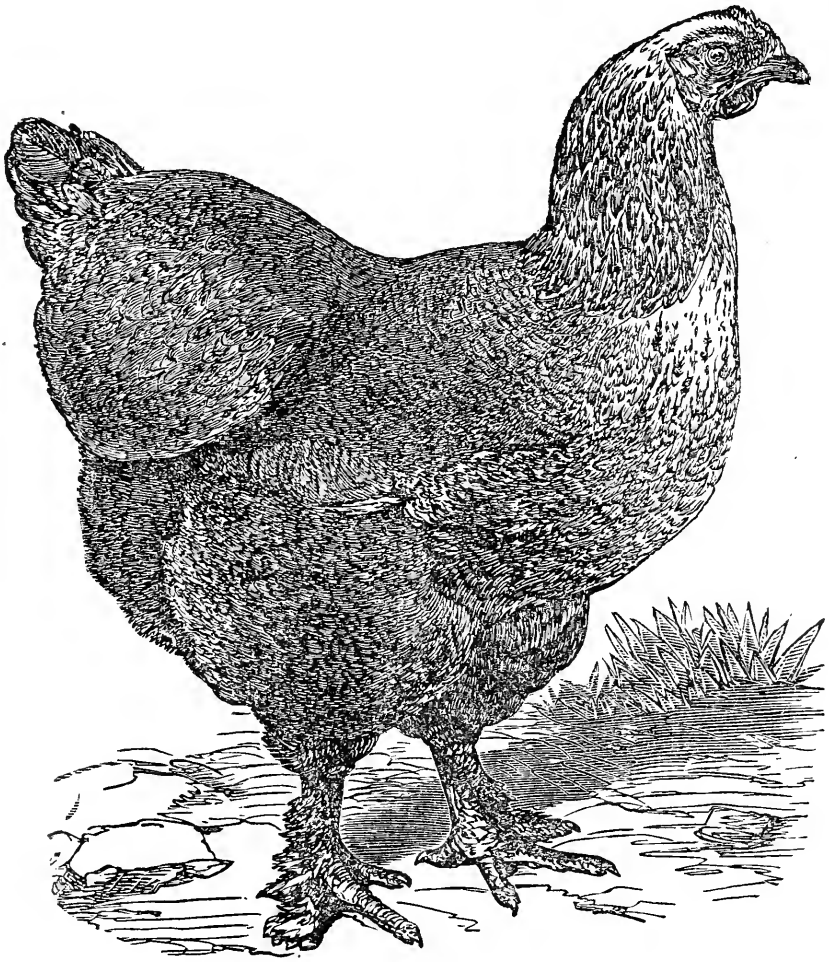
made a better fish, but certainly he never did.' So of the pure unadulterated Shanghae fowl."

Upon page 13 will be seen another early engraving of these yellow Shanghaes, which will show what the general form and appearance of this stock was in 1849, '50, '51. By domestication in England, as well as in this country, and through subsequent care in mating and selection, improvement in the form, a notable development of the shape, and greatly enhanced proportions in this variety, were soon realized among us. The various strains were bred together, from time to time, thus introducing and intermingling fresh blood among them all, and increasing their general size and desirable good qualities, remarkably; though for a long time none of us considered *color* an important matter — so that the progeny of our increasing flocks sustained the otherwise *general* characteristics of the Chinese race; for, out of *all* these earliest importations, there came every shade of yellow, red, buff, drab, light cinnamon, brown, bronze, and almost or quite black chickens, — first or last, — and no one then deemed this result either strange, or inappropriate. We changed all that in the later years of our experience, of course.

In Rev. W. Wingfield's "London Poultry Book," a splendidly illustrated octavo issued in 1853, and subsequently in 1867 re-issued under the editorship of W. B. Tegetmeier, F.Z.S., appear numerous large and finely-colored chromo likenesses of noted *Chinese* fowls, among other choice illustrations; at that time each being designated, in the title-line below these beautiful pictures, as White *Shanghae*, Buff Shanghae, Lemon Shanghae, Partridge Shanghae, &c. In the later edition of this choice work, the same *plates* are used to adorn it (under charge of Mr. Tegetmeier); but in each title, underneath these pictures, the word "Cochin" is substituted for the *original* appellation. The birds are the same, however, precisely; and similar fine illustrations of my original *Gray* Shanghaes are portrayed among the rest, and are there denominated Light and Dark "Brahmas," to correspond with the improved nomenclature of our time, and in conformity with the established names for the China fowls adopted in the English and American "Standards." From the Rev. Mr. Wingfield's 1853 edition of this work, we extract the following information about the *then* called "Shanghaes." In reference to the history and name of this variety of the China species, the author says, —

"There is a doubt, which had better be removed at the very threshold,

conveyed in the question, 'Are Cochin China and Shanghae fowls the *same?*' We have always entertained the opinion that they *are;* and since we have *invariably* found that fowls imported from China, feathered or plain-legged, dark-plumed or light, came hither, directly or indirectly, either from



BURNHAM'S FIRST DARK GRAY SHANGHAE HEN, SENT TO ENGLAND. (1853.)

Shanghae or its immediate vicinity, we have long since concluded that 'Cochin China' is a name altogether *mis*applied to this variety. This conclusion amounts to conviction, since we have received a letter from Mr. Robert Fortune, who has passed so many years in various parts of China, in which he says, —

"'The man who first gave these fowls the name of "Cochin Chinas" has much to answer for. I firmly believe that what are termed "*Cochins*" and "*Shanghaes*" are one and the *same*. One thing is certain: the breed you have in England now called "Cochin Chinas" are plentiful in and around Shanghae. They were discovered there soon after the war, and were frequently brought to England by captains of trading vessels. What grounds has any one for supposing these fowls ever *saw* Cochin China? This is a breed little known in the warmer country about Canton. In fact, the Southern Chinese people were as much struck with the size of this breed as Englishmen were. The "Shanghaes" seem to be more common about Shanghae than anywhere else in the north of China. The Southern breeds have long been known both to shipmasters and English residents; but there is nothing marked in the character of the Southern China birds.'"

At the early English poultry-show at the Zoölogical Gardens, London, in 1845, prizes were offered for "Malays and other Asiatic breeds." These offers drew to the exhibition *no* Eastern variety, except the long-time known Malays. Rev. Mr. Wingfield remarks upon this fact, that "at that time the Shanghaes were unknown to the society." No extended published notice of Chinese birds occurred in England until 1845 or '46, although the Queen's fowls, sent her by the British ambassador in China soon after the close of the war there, reached England in 1844. These remarkable fowls (called "Cochin Chinas") were exhibited by Her Majesty at Dublin first, in 1846. Yet Dickson, the English poultry author of that time, in his noted work published in 1847 makes no allusion even to the Queen's fine fowls. Messrs. Moody of Droxford, and Sturgeon of Grays, were the first prominent possessors of the *Shanghaes* in England, to both of whose importations we have already referred on a previous page. From these two consignments came all the earlier English birds of this species, bred for many years on the other side of the Atlantic. Referring to the Queen's China fowls, we will add here, that *if* the name "Cochin China" were ever appropriately applied to *any* of these birds, it more properly belonged to *that* single importation than to any other known; since these were smooth-legged, and of a different formation entirely, as we shall show in another place, when we come to the "Cochin" portion of our present book.

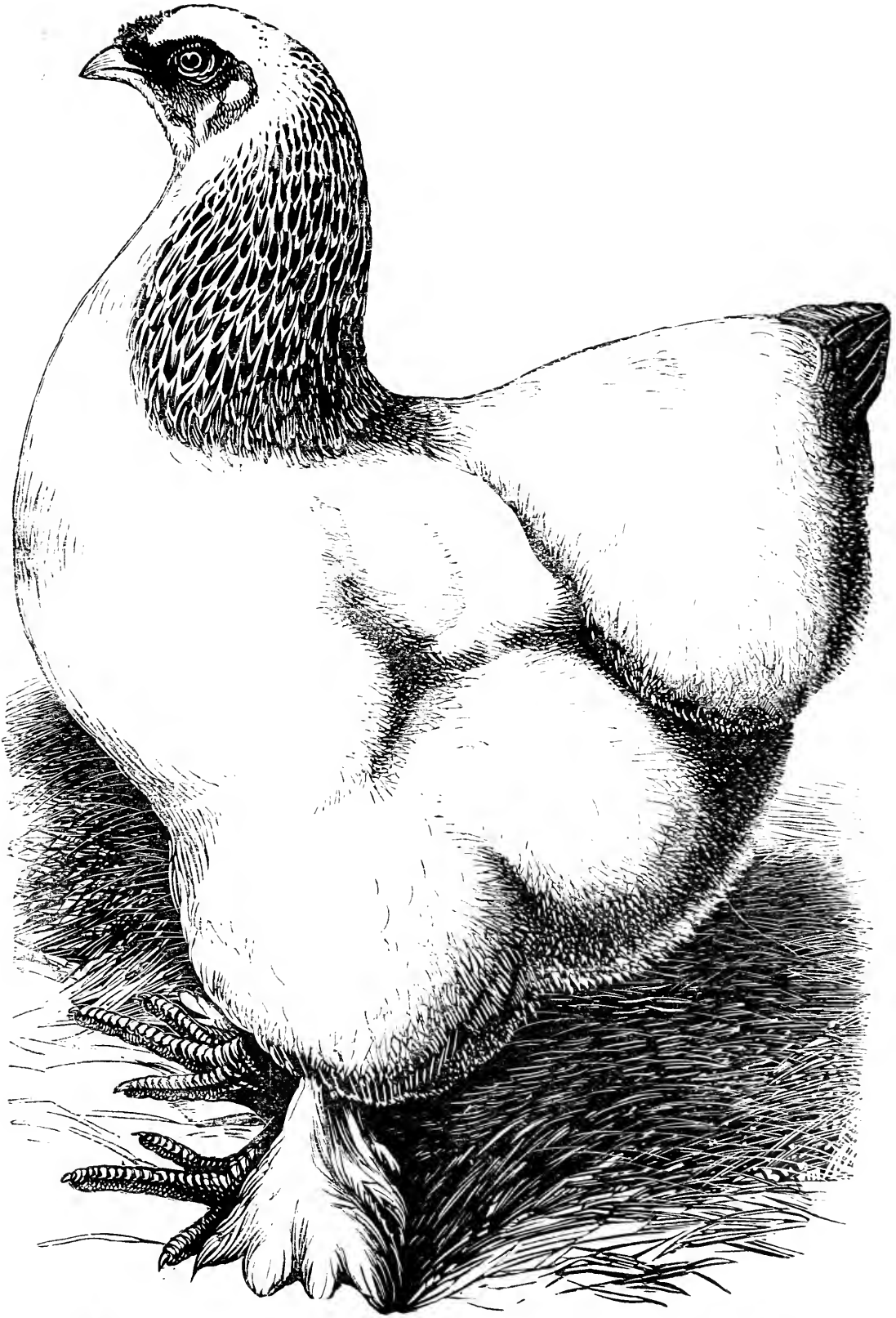
The Chinese attach no more importance to purity of color, or to accuracy in breeding, than do our own farmers all over this country with their barn-

door fowls. Indeed, it is notorious that there are no "poultry fanciers," as *we* recognize this term, at all in China. Large fowls and large eggs are what the barbarians aim for. They are very careless in breeding poultry, altogether; and to this circumstance are we indebted for the various colors of the progeny of even the "imported birds" we get from that clime. Their fowls are permitted to run all together, and have thus been bred for centuries. The prevailing *natural* color of these birds is from pale yellow to dark brown. The pure White and Black varieties are rarities, it is averred, upon Chinese soil; and the *Grays* are very scarce there: so our own friends inform us, whom we have interested to make search for us more than once, when they have left this shore for the other, with our urgent orders to bring back, if possible, upon their return, a fresh batch of the *Grays*, which have become so popular in the past twenty years here and in England.

And may we not just here appropriately refer to the remarkable fact (wherever the original Light and Dark "Gray Shanghaes," at present called *Brahmas*, came from in the first instance), that never since 1849 and 1850, from *any* country, in *any* ship, to *any* port in England or America, has a *second* clutch of these beautiful Grays chanced to reach the shores of the Western Continent?

In all our "importations," in all our purchases, in all our chance possessions of Chinese, Eastern, India, Calcutta, or Malay birds, never once since the introduction by G. P. Burnham of the Gray Shanghaes to notice in America, in 1849 and 1850, have we had any more of them. *If* this variety were so "plentiful in India" as Lewis Wright asserts they are and have been, and *if* the very doubtful statement of his quoted "East Indian officer" had any real foundation in fact, *why* have we not had a few more of the original "up the Brahmapootra" birds, either in England or America, during all the long years that have elapsed since Burnham's early two importations of Gray Shanghaes in 1849 and 1850 were shown to the public, from which seven fowls have descended direct, in Great Britain and the United States, the myriads of Light and Dark Brahmas (now thus called) to-day in possession of the thousands of breeders, fanciers, and poulterers throughout the world?

The fallacious theory of Lewis Wright — that all the multitudes of Light and Dark Brahma fowls now in existence, and the other myriad of Brahmas



MODEL OF A "STANDARD" LIGHT BRAHMA PULLET, 15 MONTHS OLD.

As bred by J. M. Wade and W. E. Flower, Penn.; Messrs. Plaisted, Stoddard, Carpenter, etc., Conn. Messrs. Sturtevant, Williams, Comey, Felch, Buzzell, and others, Mass , 1874

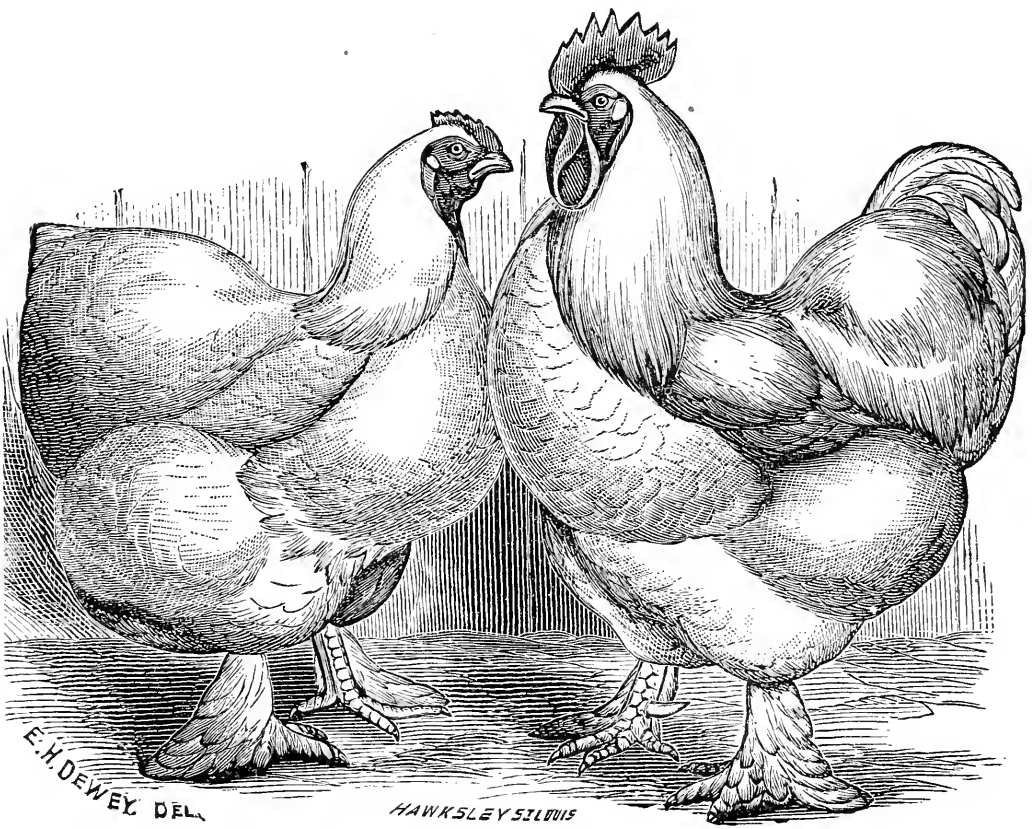
which have had their birth within the last twenty-five years, in both America and England, "have been derived from the '*one* pair' introduced into Connecticut by Mr. Chamberlin" — is too ridiculous for a moment's serious consideration. That so many hundreds of thousands of birds, so like each other in all their chief features of color, size, form, and common characteristics, *could* have been produced from a single cock and hen and their progeny, *only;* or that for a quarter of a century, without the slightest deterioration in any important particular, one pair of fowls and their descendants *could* have been bred thus in-and-in, in the hands of thousands of different persons on both sides of the Atlantic, to result thus accurately in feather, shape, proportions, and rare quality, — is simply one of the natural impossibilities. Therefore do I claim that the union of my original pair of Gray Shanghaes in 1849, re-enforced with the fresh, strong, native blood of my second lot of five Grays from Shanghae direct in 1850, more clearly and reasonably a hundred-fold demonstrates that out of *those* birds come the progeny which have been the fathers and mothers of the multiplied numbers of so-called Light and Dark "Brahmas" which have been produced within the last two decades of years, in England and America.

Now, I contend that this is a very extraordinary fact. And upon this point well may the talented correspondent of Miss Watts's London "Poultry Yard" exclaim, "There has, then, been *no* introduction of fresh blood. Marvellous birds they are, to go on with so little appearance of degeneracy; and it speaks much for the *purity* of the breed: for, were they made up of a cross, they would certainly throw back." There has been no need for *crossing* this fowl. They were all evidently of pure Chinese extraction. Their "pedigree" dates back clearly to 1849 and 1850, their nativity to China; and to-day the Gray Shanghaes breed as they did in 1851, '52, '53, and afterwards. They *are* marvellous, indeed; and we have none of us ever since imported any others of the species! Which is quite as "marvellous" a fact as is the other.

Like the imported Buff, the Red, the Brown, or the Partridge, already described, the Gray Shanghaes continue to breed their like, uninterruptedly. And in the year 1874, at the Boston, Hartford, and Buffalo exhibitions (especially at the two first-named shows), the identical form, color, style, shape, and general characteristics of this "marvellous" race were seen in the birds there shown, as we of "ye olden time" have seen them by scores

and hundreds in the days when *we* bore away the palm over all competitors, with our splendid adult samples of this unique variety of Shanghaes.

The White Shanghae is another variety of this fowl, which deservedly has hosts of ardent admirers. The first of this species within our remembrance were in possession of Geo. E. White, Esq., of the firm of Parker



WHITE SHANGHAE (OR "COCHIN") COCK AND HEN.

and White, Boston. These are portrayed in Dr. Bennett's work (1850), and are there described as an exquisitely beautiful variety of Shanghaes, — pure white in color, and formed precisely similar to the Yellow and Red varieties, better known among fanciers at that period. Mr. T. Thorpe of Cambridge, Mass., imported, or purchased of the importer, the first of this race we had in those days in Boston. We present a picture of a cock and hen of this variety, which represents them very fairly. They partake of all the charac-

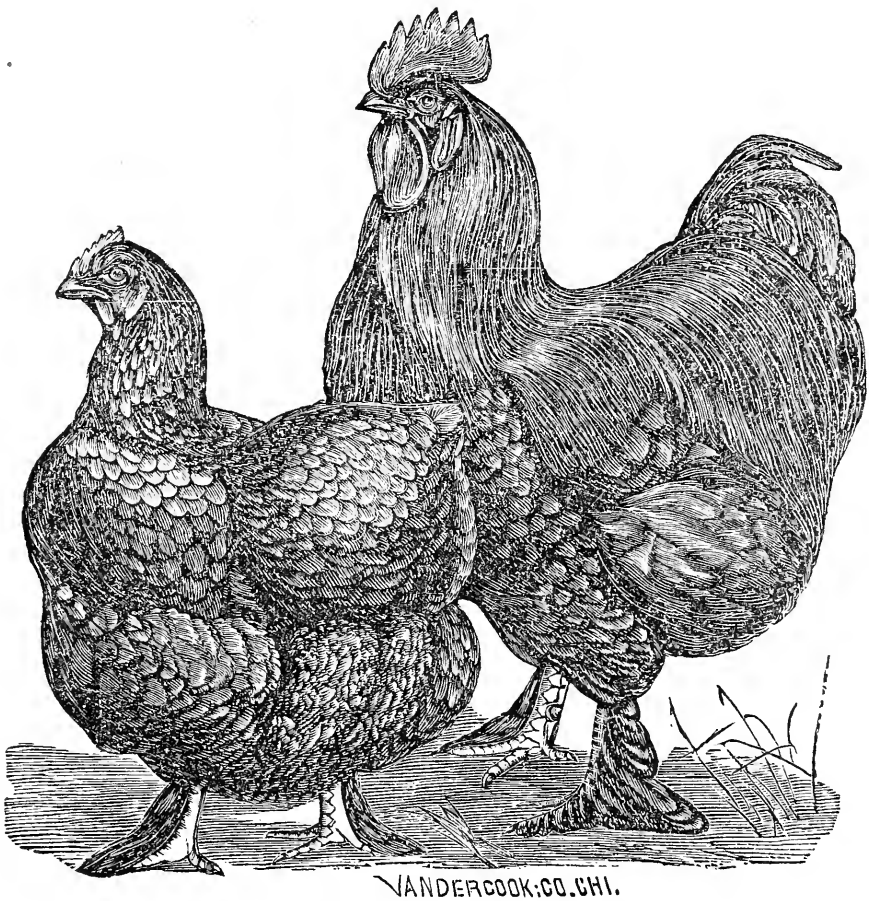
teristics of the genuine Shanghae species, in a marked degree, except the change in color. They are a beautiful fowl in every respect, and have many favorites among the fancy. At the present time, the White Shanghae is very perfectly bred all over this country, and many strains have been vastly improved in size since the early importations. Fine samples have been sent out to us from England, also, in the past few years, — such as were never before seen in this country, so far as the average weight and proportions of this variety are considered. Mr. Mark Pitman, of Salem, has a superior strain.

The introduction of White Shanghaes into Great Britain is traceable to the breeds of the Dean of Worcester, and Mr. Herbert of Powick. At this period (1851–'52) there were but very few in England, and large prices were paid for good specimens for breeding purposes. *Now* they are plentiful in that country, where they are bred to great perfection. They are not generally considered so hardy as are other colored Shanghaes; and the chickens are usually more difficult to raise than the others. Nor do they reach the weights of either the Grays or the Buffs. Mr. Bowman of Penzance, Eng., has, however, succeeded in raising a good many magnificent White Shanghaes, and his strain is very popular, as are Mr. Todd's, of Ohio, also.

The Black Shanghae is less common among us than any other variety. In 1850, at the time we obtained through Wm. T. Porter from Shanghae our second lot of Light Gray birds, we found an excellent trio (cock and two hens) of the Black variety; which, with the five Light Grays then obtained, and a splendid trio of Dark brown birds, we took to Melrose to breed. The Black ones bred true to the originals, and were of the best *color* (for their dusky metallic hue) that we ever saw. We did not fancy them greatly, however, and bred them only one or two seasons. We give portraits of the Black birds here; and it will be seen that, excepting the change of color, again, they represent the same formed fowl, from beak to toes, — the true *Shanghae*, though ebony-hued.

For several years, through the adoption of this title in England by the poultry societies and clubs, all these different colored Shanghaes have come to be called "Cochins;" and under this name only are they now recognized in the Standards on both sides of the water. This is quite as well; though, as Mr. Robert Fortune insists, "this stock never saw Cochin China," and what we all now *call* "Cochins," in England and America, are in reality but the true northern *Shanghae* race.

But a correspondent in a late American poultry journal puts this point sensibly. He says, "For my part, I prefer to see men up with the times, who have an 'axe to grind' in coming to the front as breeders of *to-day*, of fowls as they are *now*, not the antiquated breeds of thirty years ago."



BLACK SHANGHAE (OR "COCHIN") COCK AND HEN.

Correct! This is good doctrine; and to this, even we old 'uns will all respond "Amen;" while, at the same time, the "*few* varieties" of *Chinese* fowls (alluded to by this writer), known in the antiquated time of 1847 to 1852, have not been increased, I notice, by the receipt of any one additional or *new* variety from that heathen land. We still have the White, the Buff, the Drab, the Silver Cinnamon, the Gray, the Yellow, the Partridge, the

Grouse, and the Black; and all these gentlemen, who are so commendably "up with the times," are now breeding from the very identical stock in their "*modern* experience" that we ancient fogies "imported and exported and wrote books about," in the "antiquated days of twenty or thirty years ago." This early stock *has* been improved somewhat in the later time; and nobody need now object to the change in its *name* to suit the modern fancy, since the Shanghae fowl itself has never yet been changed materially in its general good qualities and characteristics, and probably never will be. It was good *enough* originally: it is good enough *now*. We will now *call* it "COCHIN," therefore, contentedly, and herein follow, where in the "days lang syne" we led. Still this fowl remains unchanged, although some later writers assume that both the Brahmas and the Cochins are an entirely different variety from the Shanghaes.

Mere theories, like those of Lewis Wright, may be promulgated, and these may be rendered plausible by argument. But recorded *facts* cannot be ignored; and in connection with this point let me quote briefly from the report of the judges of the old New-England Poultry Society, made at their third and fourth exhibitions in Boston, Mass. This exhibition was a fine one, and the entries were very large. The Committee of Judges say, officially, "At this Boston show, the best and most faultless descriptions of Red and Buff Shanghaes were shown by Geo. P. Burnham, Esq., of Melrose. And, of the Cochin Chinas, the specimens exhibited by G. P. Burnham were each and all notable, and worthy of public appreciation." This in May, 1852. At the last show of this Society, where I did not enter any fowls for premium, but only on exhibition, which came off the *same* year (1852) in the fall, the judges, in their published report, call attention to the fact that among the numerous fowls exhibited this season, as upon former occasions (noticeably in 1850 and 1851), a very unnecessary practice seems to have obtained in the *mis*naming of varieties, and recommend a close adherence hereafter to recognized titles only.

In this connection they allude to cases in point. "The largest and unquestionably *one* of the finest varieties of fowls ever shown among us, was entered by the owner of this variety as Chittagong.* Other coops of the very *same*

* These were the old Gray Shanghae pair I sold to Dr. Bennett. Entered at this show by G. W. George of Haverhill, to whom the Doctor sold them, after he bred them one season. They were *first* shown by me, in 1849, at Boston.

stock were labelled Gray Chittagongs;* others were called Brahma-Pootras;† others, from the *same* original birds,‡ were Gray Shanghaes, &c. Your Committee are divided in opinion as to what these birds ought rightfully be called; though the majority of the Committee have *no* idea that 'Brahma-Pootra' is their correct title. Several cages contained specimens positively known to have come direct from Shanghae, § and *none* are known to have come originally from anywhere else. Nevertheless, it is thought proper to leave this question open for the present; and the Committee accept for them the title of Gray Shanghae, Chittagong, or 'Brahma-Pootra,' as different breeders may elect, for the present, admitting that they are really *a* very superior bird, and will be found decidedly *the* most valuable among all the large *Chinese* fowls, of which they are clearly *a* very good variety."

This, mark, in the spring and fall of 1852, at the Boston Fowl Shows, where I did not enter the first fowl for competition. And, farther on in this Committee of Judges' Report (above quoted from), the following extracts are to the point: —

"Samples of the China stock, imported originally from *Shanghae,* were very plentiful on this occasion, and very superior fowls, bred from G. P. Burnham's importations, were numerous, and were sold in four or five instances at the very highest prices paid for any samples disposed of." Among the premiums awarded, as per report, at this fourth show (in 1852), were the "first prizes for best trio, to H. H. Williams (Burnham's stock); first for best cock and hen, to Chas. Sampson (Burnham's stock); second and third prizes to Williams, same (Burnham's stock); a first prize to C. C. Plaisted, for 'Hong Kong' fowls, then so called by contributor (from Burnham's stock); to A. White, six best chickens (Burnham's stock); to same, for best Cochin cock and hen, first prize (Burnham's stock); to Williams, West Roxbury, best trio of Cochins, first premium (Burnham's stock); to A. White, East Randolph, for best Cochin chickens, first (Burnham's stock)," &c.

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* These were called Cornish fowls, contributed by Hatch of Connecticut; and very good ones they were too, but all *young* birds.

† These were Dr. Bennett's first ones, bred from my old Philadelphia Grays, which I sold him the previous year. Shown the second time.

‡ These were my Light and Dark Gray fowls, and their progeny.

§ These were my oldest imported Grays, and other fowls.

All this is somewhat of a personal character; but I am now writing of the old days, of events in chicken-history that occurred over twenty years since. From the above data, it will be seen that several months prior to the time (December, 1852,) when I shipped the mature "Gray Shanghaes" to Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, to wit, in the spring of 1852, I exhibited old Shanghae fowls, and their progeny three, two, and one year old. In the fall of the same year, my patrons, who had bred fowls from Cochin or Shanghae chickens, or eggs purchased of me in 1850, 1851, carried away all the leading premiums with this young stock of the Grays, Reds, Buffs, &c.; and not until the year 1852 (in September) had the proper name of this fine stock been called in question. It was rightfully "Shanghae." But from and after this show began the contest that resulted in naming this much-maligned race "Brahmas" and "Cochins," of different colors; though I continued to call *my* stock "Shanghaes" for many years afterwards.

Englishmen (through the Queen's Chinese fowls) had, previously to this time, for four or five years, been breeding what *they* called "Cochin Chinas;" and this name had come to be accepted by the Society members and British poultry clubs as "*the* thing, you know," in the course of a few years later. Meantime, early American breeders of the Marsh, Forbes, and Burnham Shanghaes had begun to find a very good market in England for selected samples of these strains, and especially of the Gray Shanghaes; and Dr. Bennett, Mr. Plaisted, Capt. Williams, W. Buckminster, and myself sent hundreds of pairs and trios of this Shanghae stock abroad, to the delight and astonishment of the fanciers in Great Britain.

It has been lately stated, I observe, that in 1854 and 1857 some importations of fowls were made into England direct from Shanghae, — Partridge-colored, I think. But the English breeders persisted in calling the Gray Shanghaes they got from America (as they did these last-named birds from that port) Cochins, or Brahmas. No longer Cochin *Chinas* as at first, never latterly Shanghaes (what they *were*), but Cochins or Brahmas, they said. And to-day "so say we all;" though I had always contended for the one true name "*Shanghaes*" of different colors.

The Shanghaes have been fearfully abused and maligned — on paper — in past years. They were called homely, gawky, ravenous, clumsy, ill-favored, long-legged monsters; and though everybody was at once astonished and

interested, in greater or less degree, at this novelty among chickens when it appeared, but few fanciers took hold of it at first with any zeal. The breed worked its own way, however; and after a year or two, despite the abuse and ridicule and nicknaming heaped upon it privately and publicly, it came to be largely sought for; and a rare *furore* eventually succeeded, to obtain good samples of these Shanghaes in England, as well as all over this country.

Now, the originally imported Shanghae fowl, of different colors (*not* the original Queen's Cochin Chinas), was in no particular different from the so-denominated *Cochin* of to-day. The requirements of the Standards here and in England describe the same points possessed by the early birds, almost precisely; and old breeders, who have watched the progress in poultry "improvements" here and abroad for twenty-five years, know this. But

> "What's in a name? That which we call a rose,
> By any other *name* would smell as sweet."

I notice in Mr. Wright's latest work on poultry that Mr. Cornish, under date of a letter to Col. Weld in 1869, states (among other gross inaccuracies in said letter) that "in 1850 the name 'Brahmapootra' was *established*." And farther on, Mr. Wright says that "this was the stock fostered by Mr. Cornish and Dr. Bennett." But in Dr. Bennett's own "Poultry Book," published in Boston in 1850, the name of Brahma or Brahmapootra is not alluded to, once; while my original Philadelphia (Dr. J. J. Kerr) "Gray Shanghaes," then called by Drs. Kerr and Bennett "Chittagongs" (precisely as Cornish calls his stock, in his March 2d, 1852, letter), are both finely illustrated, and are fully described by Bennett, see pp. 26, 27, 28, as "perfect samples," "remarkable for size and beauty," "the *first* among domestic varieties of fowls," "the *true gallus giganteus*," and they "excite astonishment and admiration in all fowl fanciers who behold them," &c. At the close of this book — last page — Dr. Bennett adds, "It will be observed that the descriptions in this work *begin* with Mr. Burnham's imperial Gray Chittagong," &c. Now, if (as Cornish says) this "Brahma" name was "established in 1850," why does not Dr. Bennett (who *originated* it) somewhere in his extensive "Poultry Book" mention it? Mr. Cornish or his fowls, of course, were *not* then known to anybody; for Bennett was the first man in America to broach this subject of a new-fangled name for the fine Gray

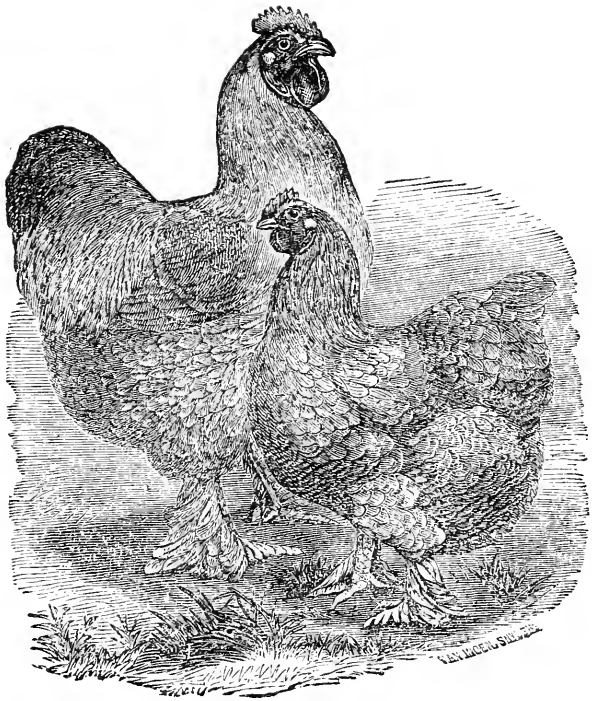
Shanghae birds; and Wright admits this. This is but another mistake of Cornish's, in the date of the year. And one word more upon this point: —

As far forward from this time as in 1854, the judges at the National Exhibition in New York, in their official report on that Show, say, "Though we have been governed by the nomenclature in the lists, we by no means assent to it as a proper classification. Shanghae and Cochin are convertible terms; but Brahmapootra is a name for a sub-variety of *Shanghaes*, plainly." And "we earnestly insist that *all ridiculous, unmeaning aliases* for fowls be abandoned, and a simple, truthful classification in name be strictly observed in the future," &c. Compare this with my quotations above from the Boston judges' report in 1852, and then let anybody declare, if they can truthfully, that "this name 'Brahma' was *established* in 1850."

This, of course, could not be. But I shall explain this point further, in my future pages. I allude to it here, because it is the Shanghae fowl that I have now been writing of, of different colors — the Gray variety among this class — whose name the "Tichborne claimants" of 1852, 1853 (sustained by Lewis Wright's sophistical *theory*), have for years been busy in changing from its true title, transforming it from the original to the modern names.

Thus we may learn, that in spite of all the changes from time to time that have occurred in the nomenclature of the China fowl, the bird itself remains the same that first came into England or America from the principal port of the Chinese Empire. For years, as I have already stated, no one could declare with any confidence that "Shanghaes" were *not* "Cochins," or *vice versa*. At that early period in chicken-raising in the United States, very few persons *knew* any thing of the real facts about this race; and we begun to ape the Britons with the "Cochin China" title, as the most euphonious. But when importation after importation arrived here, and *all* of these came from Shanghae *only*, we commenced to learn to "call things by their right names."

And this brings us to consider the so-called *Cochin* variety, by itself, in another chapter.



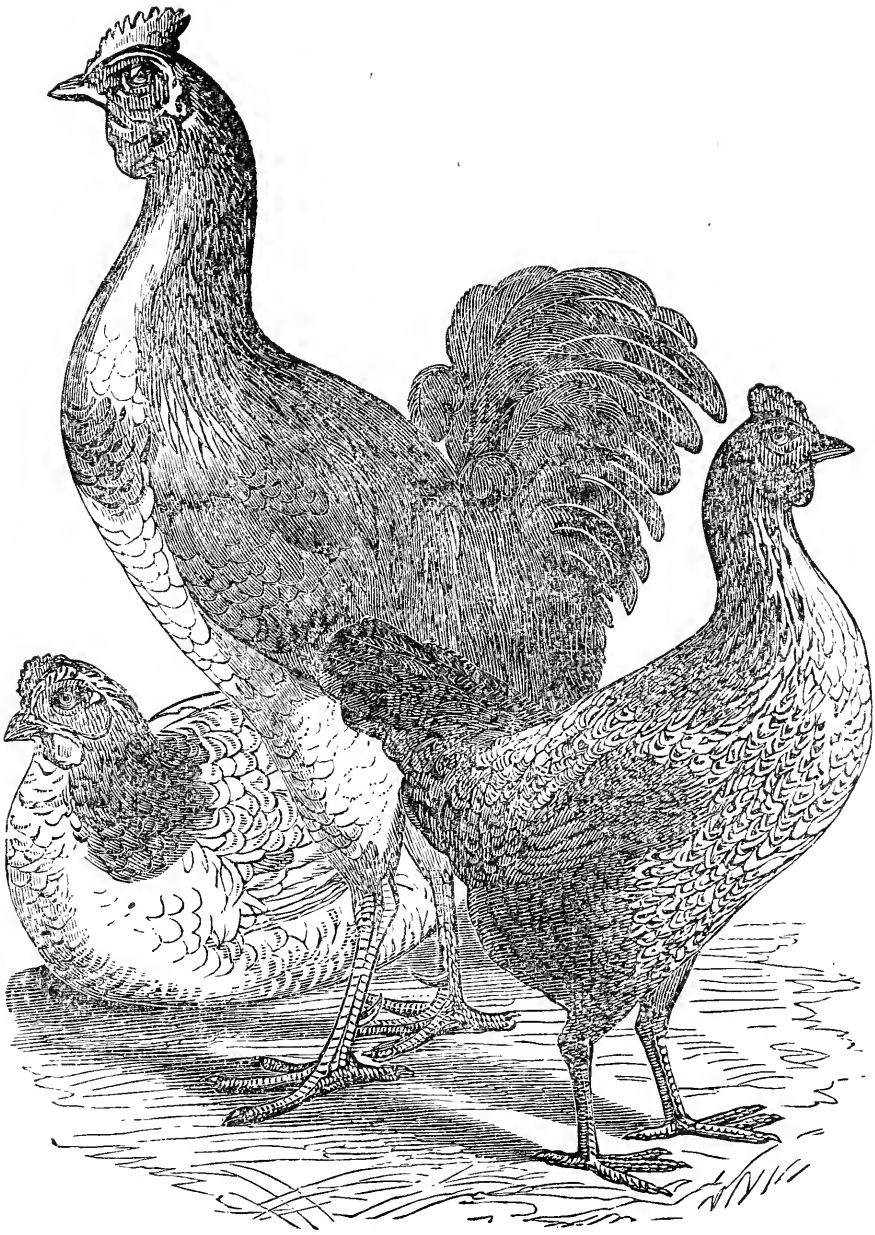
THE COCHINS.

THE "Cochin China" fowl, as it was originally known in England and in the United States, was altogether a different bird, in *shape* and *characteristics* generally, from what is denominated at the present day "COCHIN" by societies and poultry fanciers of our time. This bird originated in China, however; the first (and *only* exact) samples of which were procured at Shanghae, and were shipped from that coast-port direct to England in a British government vessel, soon after the close of the war in that country (when the Chinese trading-ports were first opened to British and other foreign commerce), by the then resident English ambassador to the Chinese court, as a present to Her Majesty, Queen Victoria.

As we have already stated in these pages, these birds were really smooth-legged *Shanghae* fowls. Still their precise origin is involved in mystery not unlike that *claimed* by certain parties regarding the early history of the "Brahmapootras," so far as any thing has ever been vouchsafed to the public in actual detail. Her Majesty was known to evince a lively interest in poultry matters at the "Home Farm," Windsor, however, as did his Royal Highness Albert, the late Prince-Consort, in agricultural affairs. And the British minister in 1843 secured what *he* supposed unquestionably to be a very choice lot of the colossal poultry of China, which he sent to London for the Queen's world-renowned aviary.

Now, it is very clear that, whatever may have been the good quality of this ambassador's general talents, and his profundity as a statesman, he evidently possessed very slight knowledge of the points or excellences of what fanciers would call good poultry; pre-supposing that this distinguished diplomatist had any *choice* presented him in the selection of the birds he thus sent from China to his queen. For, as we may readily see by examining the authentic illustration by Harrison Weir (in 1844), which is transferred to our pages from "The London Illustrated News," of a trio of the "famous Queen's Cochins" (see opposite page), these long-legged, smooth-shanked, gawky gallinaceous representatives from the Celestial dominions were really any thing but what would be esteemed, by the veriest amateur, a desirable acquisition for his poultry-yard, in *our* day. Still the monstrous proportions of these fowls astonished the people of England vastly; and the English illustrated journals were shortly occupied with pictures and accounts of these giant chickens, which were a huge novelty to Messrs. John Bull.

They were wonderful in dimensions and carriage, extraordinary layers (Mr. Walters, the Queen's poultry-keeper, verifying some one's curious statement that "the hens laid two eggs in a day frequently, and sometimes three"); they were hardy, flame-colored, very quiet, and altogether were a most valuable acquisition to the poultry of the Old Country, as everybody, on sight of them, admitted. These "Cochins" were perfectly smooth-legged; and Harrison Weir's pictures of them in "The London Illustrated News," "by royal permission," were very accurate portraits of this rare consignment, which at that time (1844) were described as belonging to the family of the *Otis tarda*, or Great Bustard, from their kindred formation and immense size, — though this early notion was erroneous, also.



QUEEN VICTORIA'S ORIGINAL "COCHIN CHINAS." (*Drawn by Harrison Weir*, 1844.)

I read these accounts, saw the engravings in the London papers, and in 1848 sent to England for half a dozen of them. The Queen presented a prize pair to Lord Heytsbury, then lord-lieutenant of Ireland; and he sent them to J. Joseph Nolan of Bachelor's Walk, Dublin, to breed. I communicated with Mr. Nolan, and finally purchased two cocks and four pullets of this Queen Victoria "Cochin China" stock, which were the *first* Cochins imported into America by a citizen of the United States, by at least two years in point of time. I bred these smooth-legged fowls, with others that I received subsequently from *Canton*, for several years, and disposed of hundreds of fine birds from this stock; though I never thought them equal to the Gray Shanghaes (or Brahmas) by a long mark, from after experience.

These were the original "Cochins," however. They were so called by the English breeders, and this name, for the Queen's stock, was never changed. *Why* they were denominated "Cochin Chinas," no one has ever yet been able to determine. Certainly they never saw Cochin China; and nobody in that Southern Chinese province ever saw any such fowls there. Mr. Fortune, who was for a long time a resident and traveller in the East, says that "whoever thus named these birds has much to answer for, since denizens of Cochin China said of these fowls, when subsequently seen by them, that they astonished those people quite as much as the sight had exercised Englishmen." Still these were the *first* known "Cochin Chinas," — of which, as I have stated, I imported the first of their progeny into Massachusetts.

The Cochins of to-day are heavily feathered upon the legs, as we all know. I received from China, fifteen or twenty years ago, three or four different lots of variously-colored fowls, most of which were thus feathered to the toes. In the case of my *Cochins*, I called them "Royal Cochin Chinas," to distinguish them from the others,— which I denominated White, Buff, Brown, or Gray *Shanghaes*, because the latter (with the exception of one lot I imported from Canton) all came direct from Shanghae.

In course of time other parties imported fowls from England or China; and the poultry societies in Great Britain decided upon calling the Chinese fowls "Cochins." The American associations followed this lead; the "standards of excellence" discarded the name of Shanghae altogether from their lists; and, adopting Dr. Bennett's name for the Grays, and the English style for the other colors, we now have only the "Cochins" and "Brahmas" for this Chinese stock, which is quite as well, since everybody agrees to it.

The *original* "Cochin Chinas" imported into England, and first bred in this country in my yards, were quite unlike the present fowls bearing this name, as I have briefly stated. The modern "Cochin" is a far better bird in all respects. At that early day, however (near thirty years since), the first comers were deemed very extraordinary fowls; and I sent samples of these chickens all over this country, for years afterwards. They have quite run out now. I have not seen a smooth-legged "Royal Cochin" for many a day, though for a long period they were popular.

This *first* importation of "Cochins" thus came from *Shanghae*. As the original illustration indicates, they were long-necked, unfeathered-legged, big-tailed, long-shanked, rangy-formed, ill-favored specimens, but of "monstrous proportions" as compared with any fowls previously seen in England. They laid huge buff-colored eggs, and a great many of them. The cocks crowed sonorously in "unearthly tones;" the hens were quiet, indolent, and dumpy; and royalty was the first possessor of these outlandish-looking birds, which the English public naturally considered a big thing in its way.

And so it was. This consignment created a wondrous *furore* among the lovers of poultry; and the royal "Cochin Chinas" were the town talk for months after their arrival upon British soil. Other Chinese samples followed this importation. Three or four merchants received clutches of these fowls from China subsequently, and these all came with heavily-feathered legs. The form of these latter birds was of a more compact description. They came shorter in the leg, heavier in the breast, thicker in the thigh, squarer in body, broader-backed, and shorter-tailed, while the general (yellow or brownish) *color* was similar. The commoners sensibly called *their* fowls "Shanghaes" for a time. And then arose the discussion in England about the proper *name* by which they should be distinguished. Some called them "Cochins" (or Cochin Chinas): others adhered to the more appropriate and natural title, — since they came from that port, — "Shanghaes." Thus a contest occurred in the newspapers about the proper title for *these* birds, too, which eventuated, after years of talk and argument, *pro* and *con*, in agreeing upon "*Cochin*," for the Chinese birds of all colors, as we have it established to-day.

Referring to the early poultry work of Dr. J. C. Bennett, published in March, 1850 (*written* in 1849), I extract from pages 45, 46, 47, the annexed

description of my "Royal Cochins," the first imported into America, which were bred in Ireland from the Queen's original stock, — of which Dr. Bennett publishes an original full-page picture from life, which he thus alludes to: —

"It is with peculiar satisfaction that I am able to adorn this book with the beautiful original portraits which are here presented, of G. P. Burnham's importation of Cochin Chinas. They are drawn from life by Mr. Durivage, and are engraved by Mr. Marsh, — artists of acknowledged ability and accuracy. This representation of Mr. Burnham's fowls is believed to be the *only* correct delineation of this species (then) extant, and I flatter myself will henceforth be deemed the standard of comparison. Mr. Burnham's importations are *the best* of any of the Cochin China race that have been brought to this country. They are from Mr. Nolan's (of Dublin) stock, and took the premium at a late fair in England, while standing at the side of Her Majesty's original imported fowls."

This importation consisted of six fowls, two cocks and four pullets. They were raised by J. Joseph Nolan of Dublin, to whom the lord-lieutenant of Ireland sent, to breed, the original pair presented to that dignitary by Her Majesty. Out of that stock (the Queen's birds), my Cochins came direct to me, into Massachusetts, in 1849; and the following description of these birds appears in Dr. Bennett's work: —

"The cocks are very promising in size. The color of one is brown and red, the other red and black. The plumage is beautiful, both in the roosters and the pullets. The color of three of the latter is generally a yellowish brown" (what we should nowadays call partridge-colored) "with black-tipped or marked feathering; the fourth pullet is of a deeper brown. The legs are free from feathers, except a slight show on the cocks, and vary in color from a reddish yellow to dark brown. The form of the pullets is *un*like any fowls I have ever seen; though there is some general resemblance to the pure Dorking. They stand higher in the leg, however. The bodies are symmetrical, but long. The tail is also longer than that of the Shanghae, and is very thin and tapering from the rump outwards. The head of these fowls is quite small, the combs very small, and there are but slight signs of wattles, as yet, on the pullets. The neck is long and serpent-like, the eye extremely large and brilliant, the chest is full, and the breadth of back is very great. The frames of these fowls are ample, and the plumage lays closely to the body. They weighed, on the average, at starting from Ireland, about eight pounds each, the cocks about nine pounds. . . . A reference to the

original picture in 'The Illustrated London News' shows a strong resemblance; indeed, the figure in the foreground is a fair portrait of Mr. Burnham's birds," &c.

Why this fowl was called "Cochin China" at the outset, no one has ever yet explained. It is beyond question the fact that no such birds were ever produced in that southern province of the Chinese empire, which State, by reference to our map again, the reader will perceive is located hundreds of miles below the ports where our ships trade. And it is positively known that no such large fowls have ever been known there, as the inhabitants of Cochin China territory voluntarily avouch. When the real Shanghae fowls were first seen by these people, they exclaimed at their monstrous proportions; and, as Mr. Robert Fortune stated in 1853, "they were as greatly astonished at sight of these enormous birds, as were the British, when they met with them."

We have yet to learn that there existed between the northern and southern extremities of the Chinese coast, prior to the opening of the ports there to foreign trade, any commercial communications that would warrant the supposition that the large *Shanghae* fowls would be likely to be transported thence to Cochin China. It is proved, on the contrary, by abundant declarations on the part of the few English travellers and naturalists who have visited both portions of the empire, that this stalwart representative of the *gallus giganteus* at any rate *is not indigenous* to Cochin China. This fowl is not known at all in that part of China. And Mr. Fortune, who has resided in and travelled extensively over the interior, at both extremes of the coast borders, declares emphatically that this class of domestic bird is not only unknown there, but that the fowls of Cochin China territory are by no means of a marked character in any respect.

We conclude, therefore, that this misnomer for the Queen's fowls was *invented*, as was the case in the instance of "Brahma" for another miscalled variety,—the former being coined by some British sailor, who was ambitious to get up a little sensational nonsense in the way of a name for these foreign birds, such as would be more high-sounding and grandiloquent, perhaps, in his estimation, than the common-sense appellation they should have been called by from the beginning, to wit, plain *Shanghaes*.

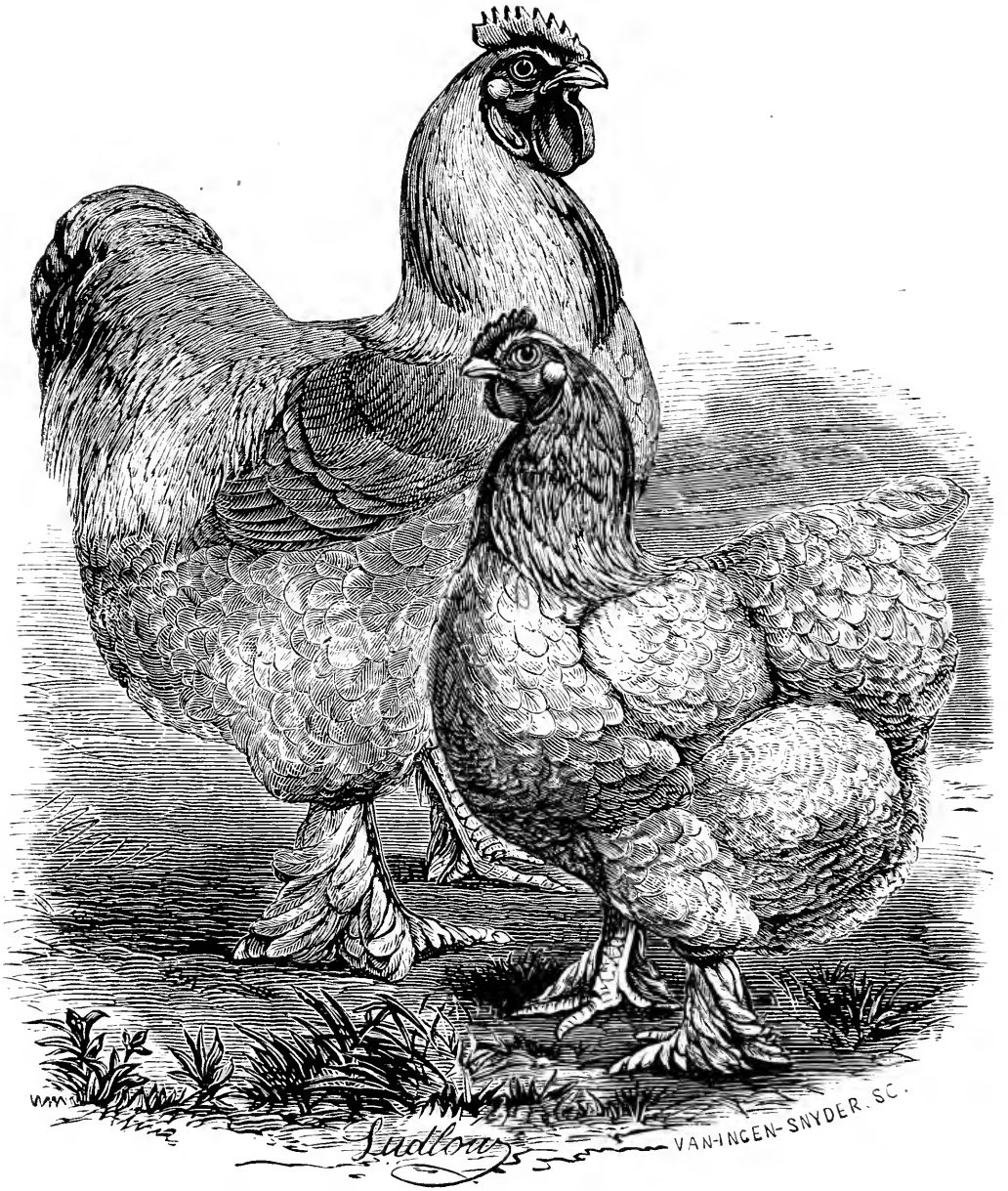
It surely will not be argued by any sensible person, that the English ambassador, whose official headquarters were at Canton, Shanghae, or Pekin, in the north, would be likely to go down to Cochin China, ten or twelve hundred miles south, to procure the birds, when these fowls were to be had at Shanghae (which has been proved to be their home in a hundred instances since then) so readily. And, moreover, is the fact clearly established that Her Majesty's fowls came not from Cochin China, when we remember (as in the "Brahmapootra" case) that no shipment from that same Cochin China country to England or America has ever *since* been heard of; while we have ample authority for the fact that "no such large fowls were ever known in that region by the natives of Cochin China."

Still Messrs. Bull are a stubborn race, and in their likes and dislikes they adhere to habit with wonderful tenacity. Her Majesty's fowls were originally dubbed "Cochin Chinas;" and, had they subsequently been proved to have come from Norway, her faithful subjects would have insisted upon calling them Cochin China, at any hazard. As in the case of the "Brahmapootras," they shortened that title to "*Brahmas*," however, so, in the other instance, they dropped the second syllables of the original name, and established "*Cochin*" for the Chinese varieties. There is no objection to either name, now: both are expressive and sufficiently brief. But we have never yet been able to determine why the name of the fowls whose rightful cognomen we are now considering should have become established in this style; since it is beyond doubt, that these birds never saw the country of Cochin China (as Mr. Fortune avers), any more than did the splendid Gray Shanghaes ever revel upon the banks of the Brahmapootra.

The reader is here requested to turn over to page 55, to examine the fine illustration there given of "Buff China Fowls." This drawing is furnished us by Jos. M. Wade, Esq., of Philadelphia, among others, and admirably represents a fine pair of adult birds of the now called "Buff Cochins" of modern days. These fowls were drawn from life by J. W. Ludlow of Birmingham, Eng., from a trio of "Buff Cochins" selected by Mr. Wade of the Oak Lane Poultry Yards, during a late trip to England for that purpose, the artist and breeder agreeing that they were the finest trio of "Cochins" they had seen: the cock being the same that was used for the English "Illustrated Book of Poultry," by Lewis Wright. The original stock, whence these birds come, had its birth in *Shanghae*.

The Shanghae fowls of all the different colors, from white to black, as we have described them in a previous portion of this work, are now called "*Cochins*," therefore. The English nor the American standards set down among their "recognized breeds" any of these "old-fashioned titles." We all go for improvements nowadays; and it is just as well to fall in with the large majority who have established these names, and which the present generation of poultry-breeders and fanciers have come to be accustomed to. Yet it is also as well that the younger portion of our fraternity inform themselves as to the original title of this now Americanized and Englishized nomenclature for fowls, and learn where the old stock first came from; since it is not impossible, sooner or later, that some of our younger fanciers in America may chance to find themselves in China, hereafter, — upon a pleasure-trip, perhaps, which may be extended even to the limits of Cochin China proper; and those who may read these lines may then remember our assertions, and profit by the hints contained in this little volume, upon this subject.

The Cochin is minutely described by a leading authority, in terms precisely like those used to designate the original "Shanghae" fowl we have already noticed at length. He must have a stout beak, round head, fine quality of upright single comb. The eye should be red and full, for beauty and for use: it gives a nice, brisk look to a sufficiently quiet bird, harmonizes better with the general color, denotes more constitution, and is less liable to disease. The neck not too long; the body long, deep, and broad; the shank and tail short. The true carriage of the body, both in the cock and hen, should be upright forward, with the hinder parts comparatively raised. A great depth from the base of the neck above, to the point of the breast-bone with its weight of flesh, tends to produce this form, and to show to advantage the fluff and feathers peculiar to this fowl. The length of the breast-bone is to be desired and looked to. With this form all will appreciate the neat head, full neck, and broadness of the back, continued from across the wings to the tail; and that redundant supply of feathers immediately before the tail, that gives the broad, square look that distinguishes the high-caste birds, and which makes their tails apparently so short. The small, compact wing will accompany these qualities, and with that a peculiar bunch of feathers. On the back, before the tail, will be found a profusion of feathers, and that fluffiness about



BUFF CHINA COCK AND HEN. Imported by Jos. M. Wade, Philadelphia, Pa.

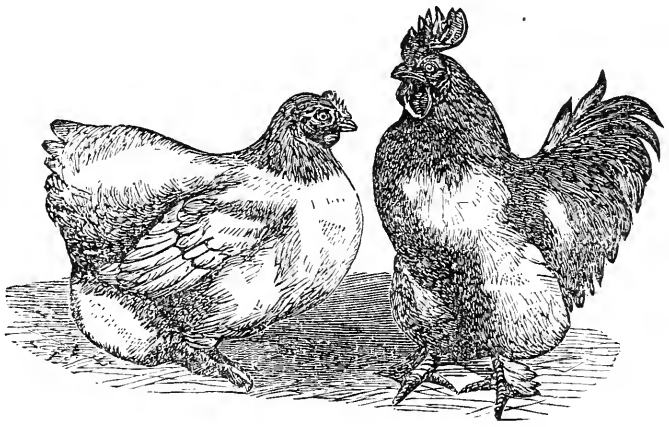
the thighs, and about and under the tail and the hinder lower portions of the body, that forms, with the feathered legs, one of the chief characteristics of the race. Too much importance cannot be attached to straight, well-boned, shortish shanks; and, if you want appearance, weight, and constitution, they *must* be wide apart.

In neither cock nor hen do we like to see the tail sticking straight up, but forming a nice, agreeable line with the back, or slightly elevated; and terminating in nice, soft, but somewhat longer and drooping feathers in the cock; the whole in the hen, from the feathers around it, wearing a much shorter appearance. A tinge of red on the back of yellow legs, stout and short, suits us best. In forming a standard for them, we ought to insist on those points *that are peculiarly theirs*, and to discountenance those that in any way imply the possibility of an admixture with another breed.

They are the most domestic, amiable, quiet, and peaceable of all the varieties of poultry. They are exceeded by none in their attachment to their own houses or yards, from which they never wander far, even when their liberty is unrestricted; and in quietness they are unequalled. They are good layers, and careful sitters and mothers; and, what is very important, the chickens are hardy, easy to raise, and less liable to be affected by disease than those of many other breeds. In short, as layers they are unequalled; laying when quite young, and in the coldest days of winter, as well as the finest days of spring.

This breed, it is supposed, have been propagated by the Chinese for a special purpose, and are the result of long and persevering efforts on their part, in the same way and by the same means that choice breeds of cattle have been obtained with a particular end in view, — some for taking on precocious fat, others for milk, &c. The object the Chinese had in view in rearing this description of fowl, was for caponizing. His mammoth height and lank proportions are just what are required for making a capon weighing, when fifteen or sixteen months old, a dozen pounds or over. Yet, so far as we are generally informed, the instances where such care in multiplying fowls in China is practised, are but few, since the majority of the natives raise immense *numbers* of chickens, only; and do not look so interestedly after especial excellence in any particular strain or variety of poultry, when they can so much more easily produce thousands of the medium qualities, which answer their purpose, ordinarily.

The latest variety of the now so-called Cochins is "a grand little fowl" recently minutely described by Henry Beldon, a noted English breeder. This is known as the Cochin *Bantam*. The originals of this small breed are said to have been taken from the garden of the imperial summer-palace at *Pekin*, when that royal establishment was sacked in the late Chinese rebellion. Here, again (though we have little faith in this story by itself), we observe the positive characteristic of the Briton, when once his mind is fixed upon an idea, — in the persistence exhibited to prolong this "Cochin" misnomer for a Chinese bird avowedly admitted to have come from the imperial garden at *Pekin*, distant many hundred miles north of the province of Cochin China. Our own opinion is, that these birds are akin to the old-style Chinese Bantams we have had in America many years.



COCK AND HEN OF THE "COCHIN BANTAM" VARIETY.

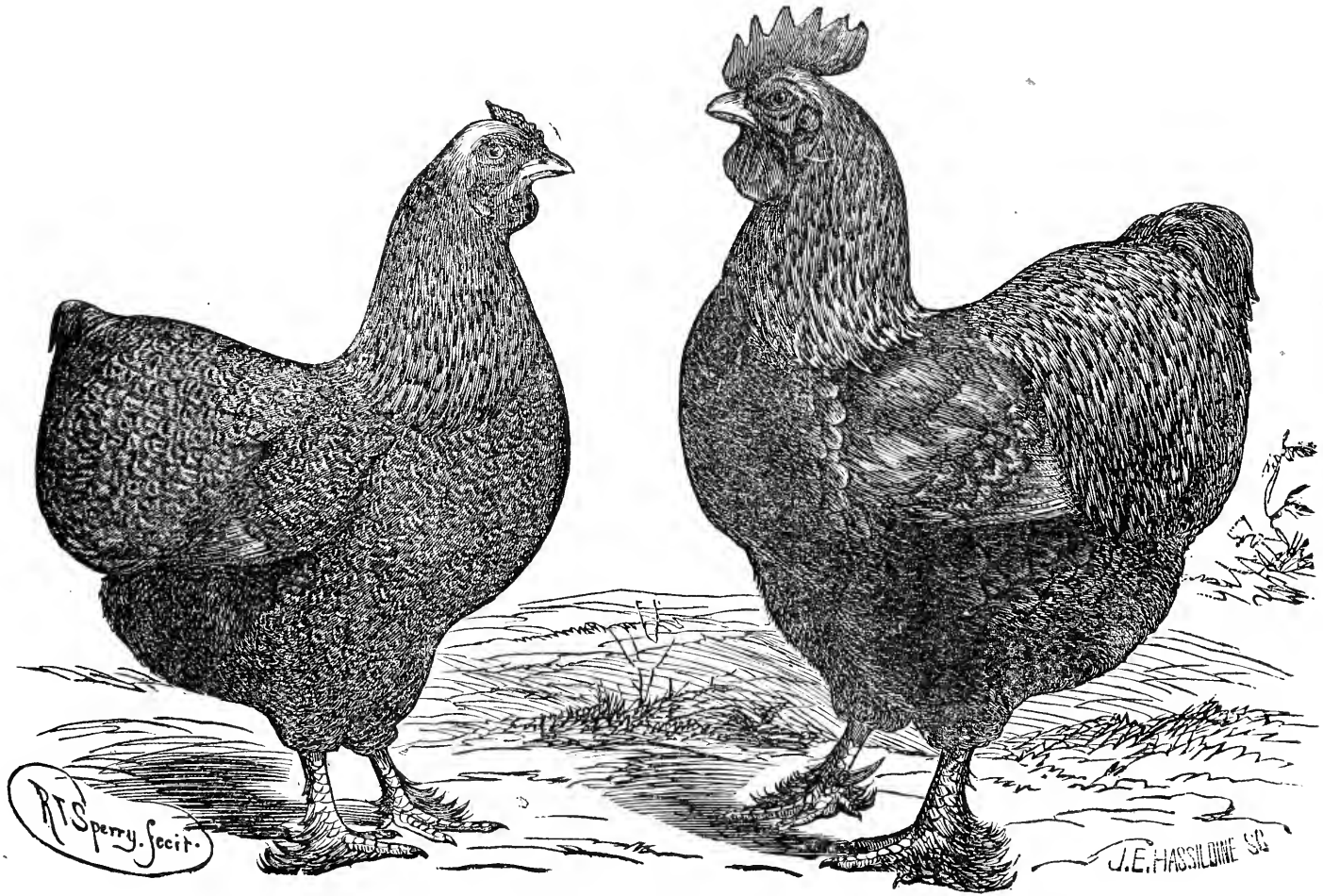
This diminutive bird was first brought to public notice in England, as late as at the Crystal Palace poultry-exhibition of 1862. They were shown by Mr. Kerrich of Dorking, who has retained and bred them in their purity, constantly; who, it is said, rears them with great success, which is accounted for by the fact that the County of Surrey is warmer than other English districts, according to this authority.

Mr. Beldon says of these "Cochin Bantams," that, "as they spring from a single pair, it is no wonder that the chicks are difficult to rear. Of course I am aware that by crossing with other breeds a stronger bird is produced;

but the breed by crossing loses much of its beauty, the produce having longer shanks and tail, and often spotted hackles. In fact, they are not to be compared to the true breed. The real *Pekin* is a first-class Cochin China in miniature. I have had them of such excellence that no large Cochin could excel them; and, what is somewhat remarkable, the chickens from the pure breed are always good, and they breed as true as sparrows. The chicks are difficult to rear, and are a bird of the sunshine; and, when chicks, require to be fed often. Hard-boiled eggs, chopped up with bread-crumbs, I have found answer well in the earlier stages of their life, then mixed up with oatmeal, and so on to oatmeal made up into a stiff paste, and oatmeal and thirds, and then, with a little grain mixed in; in fact, they require to be pampered somewhat. The chicks feather very rapidly at eight to ten weeks old, being as pretty as paint; it is well known that, until the second year, when the cocks get fully furnished in their feathering, the first year they are somewhat scanty in their plumage. This does not apply to the hens. For breeding purposes, I prefer the one-year-old cocks. I find they breed much better than the two-year-old birds. The points of the breed are as follows: smallness in size, — cocks weigh from sixteen to eighteen oz., hens fourteen to sixteen oz.; shape exactly like the large Cochin; legs short and well feathered, and may be either willow or yellow color, or even buff throughout; comb of course *single*, and as the large Cochins."

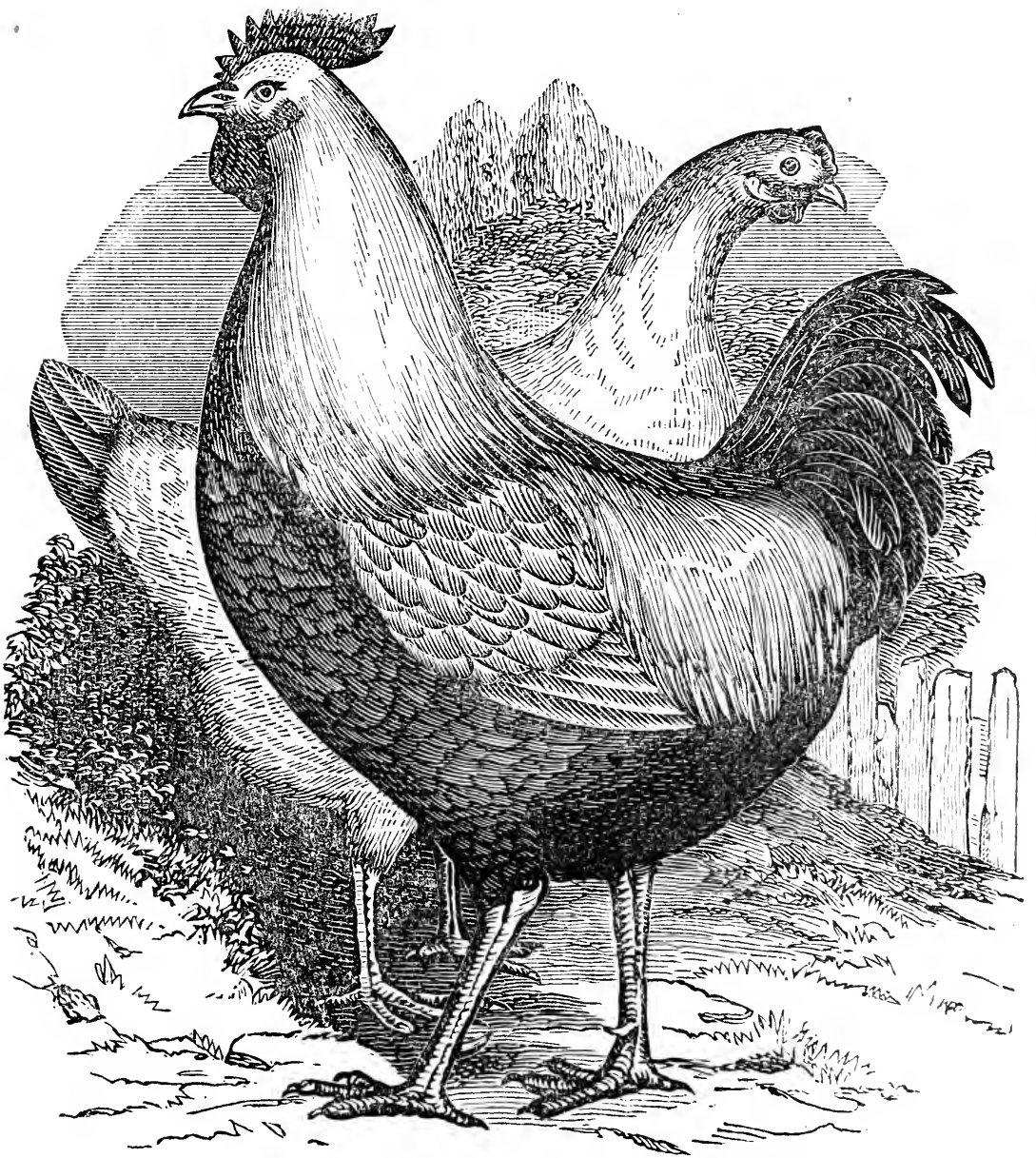
In a late discussion held by the Massachusetts Poultry Society in Boston, veteran breeders of the Cochin and Brahma varieties held that it is quite time that a correct standard in shape, and appropriate characteristics of the China varieties should be fixedly determined on in this country, in order that fanciers may know and realize what *form* and *points* it is advisable and *en règle* to aim to breed to, nowadays. If the best type of the true original Shanghae fowl, imported from that city five and twenty years ago, were strictly adhered to, admirable portraitures of which bird, in its genuine truthfulness of delineation, is given in this volume of Mr. T. S. Cooper's stock (on page 10), and if these were taken as a model, — in our own opinion, breeders could not fail to approach perfection rapidly in producing birds of *this* type of the now-called "Cochins."

On page 61 we give portraits of the original cock and hen (as illustrated in Kerr and Dixon); and, on page 62, portraits of a trio of six months' old Cochins (of the Queen's variety) from the same work. These are like-



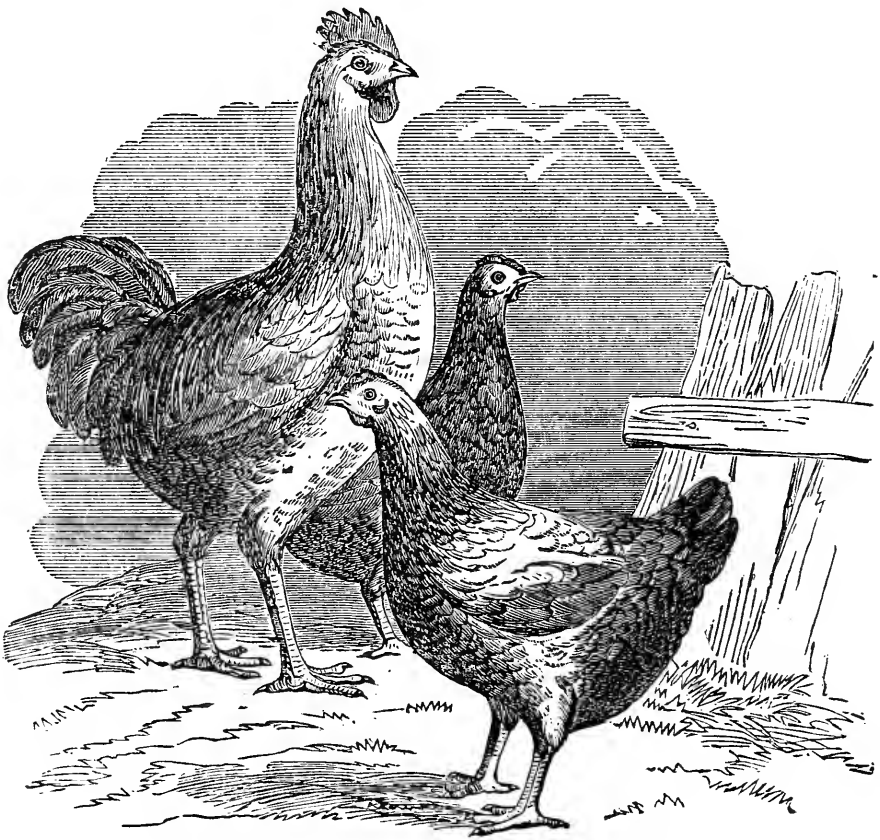
PORTRAITS OF A MODERN "PARTRIDGE COCHIN" COCK AND HEN (1873), AS BRED BY *W. H. Brackett, G. W. Bradley, Philander Williams, W. H. Todd, etc.*

nesses of my early Cochin China stock, smooth limbed, taken from the birds in my yards at Roxbury, Mass., in 1849; from which illustrations it will be seen how much these *then* called "Cochins" are like (or unlike) the so-called



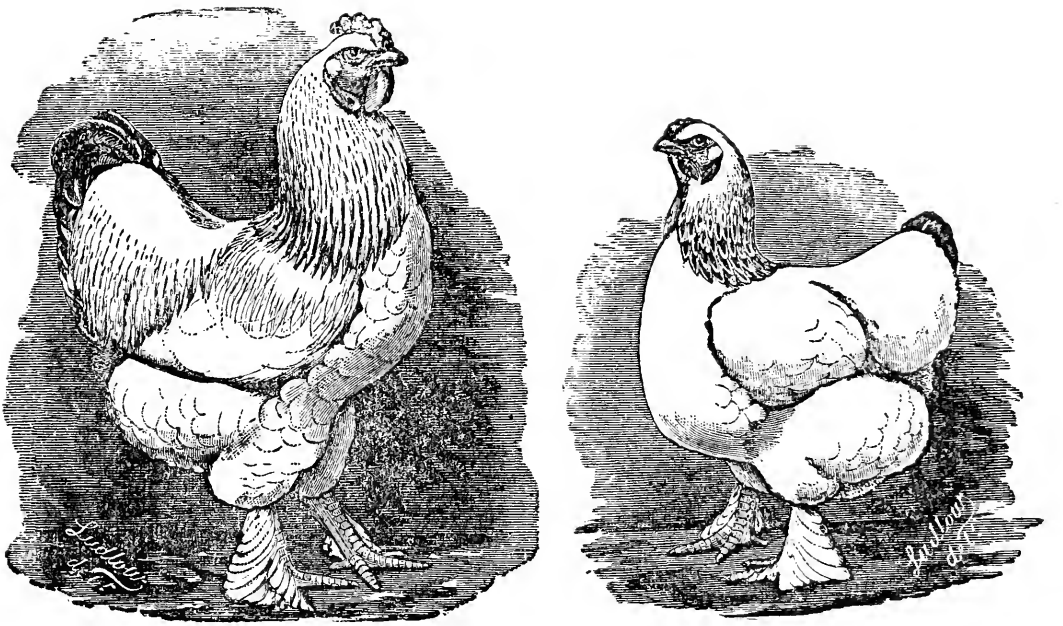
G. P. BURNHAM'S ORIGINAL "COCHIN CHINAS" (1849).

Cochins of our time. The figures are presented for purposes of comparison with other drawings of fowls in this volume, with the reminder that *these* delineations represent the Cochin stock first had in America, and otherwise portrayed in Weir's picture (in 1844) of these smooth-legged birds on page 48, representing the Queen's Cochins.



SIX MONTHS' OLD COCKEREL AND PULLETS. BURNHAM'S EARLY "COCHINS" (1850).

The name of "Cochin" was afterwards generally adopted in Great Britain for all the different colored Chinese fowls; and fine samples were bred there of the Buff, the Cinnamon, and the Partridge especially, which were sent out to this country, and which are *now* being imported thence continually, by American breeders and fanciers, to replenish and keep up the character of the "Cochin" stock now in this country.



THE "BRAHMAS."

It is my purpose, in this part of my present volume, to place upon record as accurately as may be, the actual *facts* pertaining to the variety of fowls mentioned in the above caption; believing that a clear statement regarding this breed will prove, even at the present day, more or less interesting to the poultry-breeders and fanciers of the United States, set down in concise form, with *data* accompanying this account, to verify the statements in relation to the true modern history of these Chinese fowls imported into and bred in America, originally known among us as "Gray Shanghaes," and latterly as "*Brahmas.*"

Early in 1849 I learned that a few Light-Gray fowls of extraordinary proportions and remarkable qualities had been imported from China into Pennsylvania. I had, previously to this time, sent to England for a clutch of the

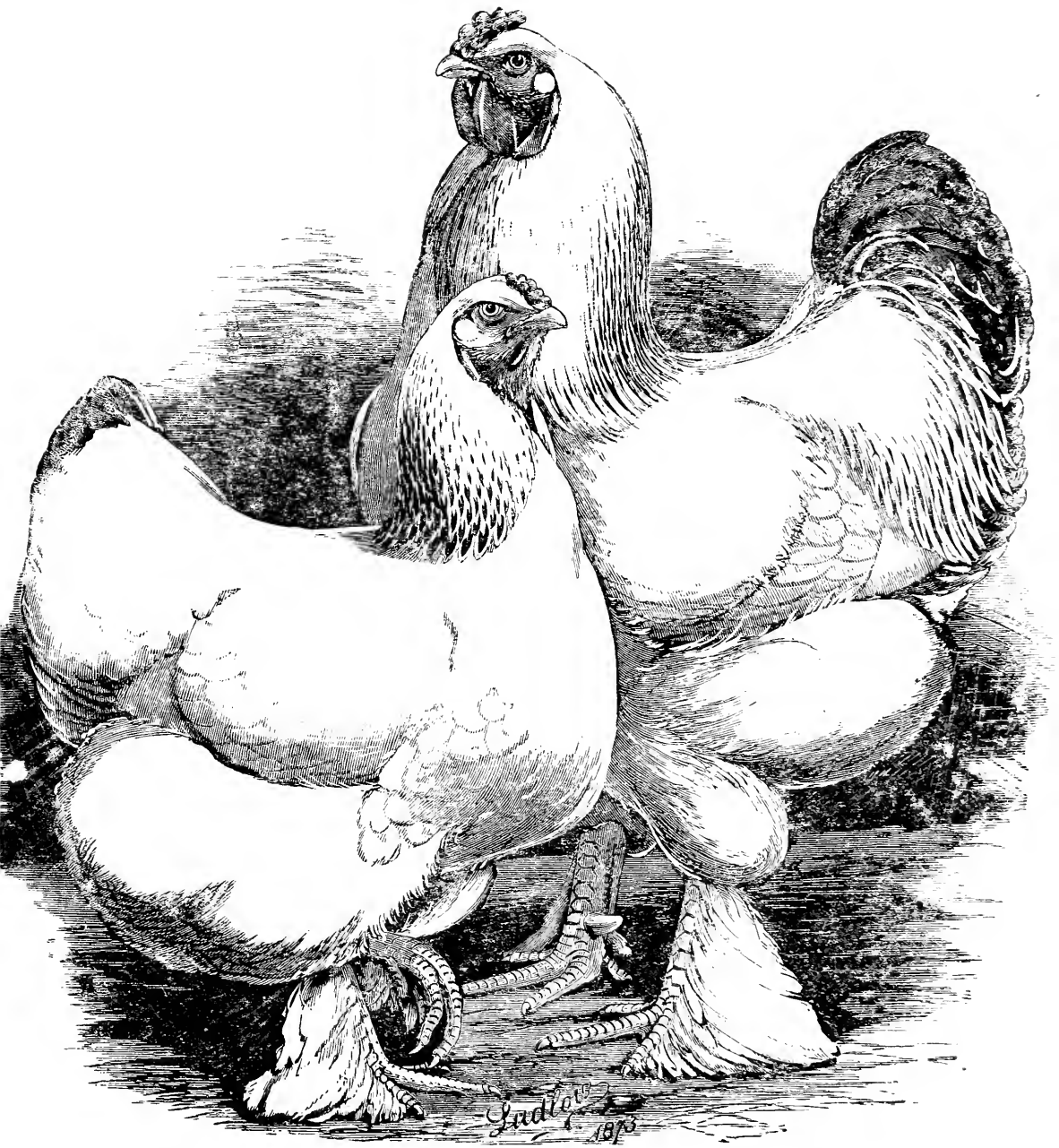
Queen's "Cochin China" fowls, which, as I have stated, had been also greatly lauded through the English press; and which stock had been sent to Her Majesty by the British ambassador in China, upon the opening of Chinese ports to foreign commerce after the war there.

But some *Gray* fowls had reached Pennsylvania, which my friend Dr. J. J. Kerr of Philadelphia (then known in poultry circles by his *nom de plume* "Asa Rugg") thus wrote me about: "This remarkable variety must, in my opinion, stand at the head of the races of poultry, having the *largest* blood in them of *any* breed of fowls with which I am acquainted. They come here from Shanghae, China. They are light gray or streaked white; and at seven months old I have one pair that weigh over nineteen pounds."

Dr. John C. Bennett's book contains portraits of the two birds mentioned, after I got them, which are drawn from life, and engraved by S. E. Brown of Boston, which the author thus describes (in 1850), though this picture was taken and this description was written in 1849, when the fowls were young, and while that work was in course of preparation. Dr. Bennett says, "This breed of fowl has been imported into Pennsylvania within the last two years, and ranks at the head of the list in that region for all the good qualities desirable in a domestic bird. The color is a light streaked *Gray*, rather than otherwise; and the portraits given below are those of fine samples of this great stock. They are designated 'Gray Chittagongs.'"

These were my first Gray fowls, portraits of which, from the original drawings (still in my possession), taken when the fowls were quite undeveloped in form, appear in this present book, and which for years I called "Gray Shanghaes," although Dr. Bennett called them at first "Chittagongs," as we all did.

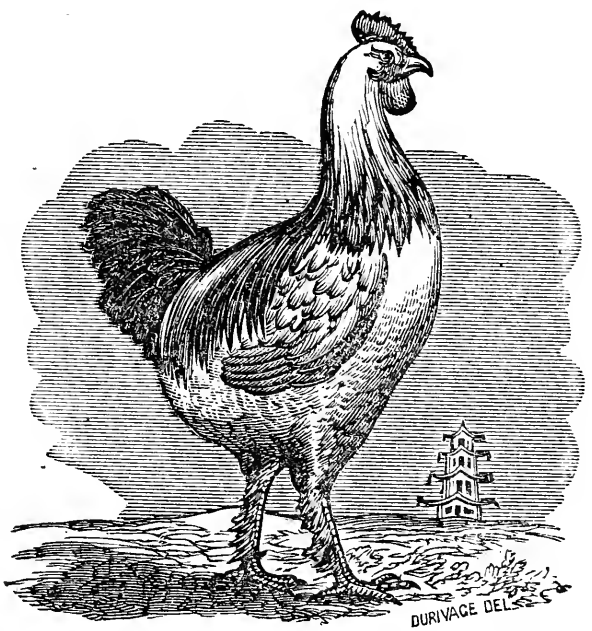
In describing the *Chinese* fowls, to which class of birds this brief work is exclusively devoted, I thus make mention of my light "Gray Shanghaes" here because the date at which I first obtained this breed was during the same year that I received the Queen's "Cochin Chinas" from England; and because, moreover (although for some little time neither of these choice varieties were greatly appreciated), these "Gray Shanghaes," as they were called by me, for the reason that they came from Shanghae into Pennsylvania, have turned out to be first in the estimation of all the admirers of good China stock; and, in my judgment, to-day, as Dr. Kerr writes me about the old pair in 1849, "they stand at the head of the races of poultry" in the world.



LIGHT BRAHMA COCK AND HEN. (Prize Birds. From Photographs.)

Owned and bred by W. H. Todd, Vermillion, Ohio.

In 1850, in New York City, on board ship direct from Shanghae, in company with Wm. T. Porter, Esq., then editor of the New-York "Spirit of the Times" (who informed me of the arrival of these fowls from China), I procured five *lighter* colored Gray fowls, nicely marked, and very even in pencilled plumage, which I paid $100 for, and took to Massachusetts; and afterwards bred *with* the old pair, and their first progeny. These I called Gray Shanghaes still, because they *all* came from that port. And, though the poultry-books denominated the original pair for *one* season "Chittagongs," *I* had no



THE ORIGINAL "GRAY SHANGHAE" (DR. KERR) COCK, AT EIGHT MONTHS OLD.

name for this fine variety other than "Gray Shanghaes" for several years. Knowing that all of them came from *China*, in vessels from the then newly-opened port of *Shanghae*, I could see no reason for calling these birds after the name of a state or province in *India*, — to wit, Chittagong. And, knowing also as I did afterwards, when, where, and by whom the name "Bramapootra" was created (as I will shortly show), I would not assent to *mis*naming so grand a fowl. And so, as I have said before, I shortly named them "Gray Shanghaes," which I deemed their appropriate cognomen, since they all

came to this country from the Chinese port of Shanghae, and were simply *gray* in color — instead of being buff, white, partridge, or black.

Fanciers immediately discovered, when I had my *latest* Light Grays housed at home in their roomy quarters, that "they were too white;" they "were too indistinct in color;" they "were too light." But I bred them steadily that year, and very satisfactorily. I sold a great many eggs, meantime. In the summer and fall I sent away several young chickens; and in 1851, I exhibited at the Boston shows the old and some young stock, though but little was said about them, except that they were showy fowls, and very large.

After breeding the Philadelphia birds a year, I sold my *first* pair of Grays to Dr. Bennett, who then had a fine stock of sundry varieties at Plymouth, Mass. Here the doctor first put forth the famous *original* "Plymouth Rocks," which he thus described: "I produced this fine breed from a Cochin China cock with a hen crossed between a Fawn-colored Dorking, Malay, and Wild Indian." *

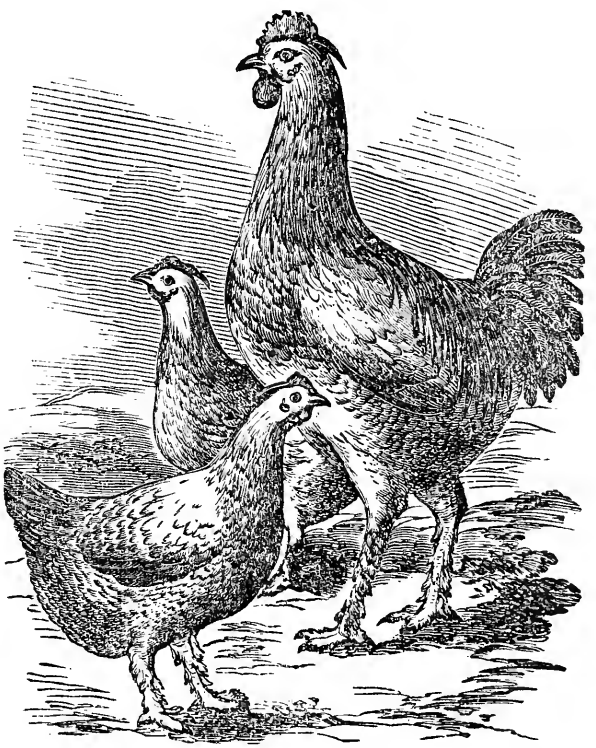
The clever, talented doctor was noted for his enterprise and zeal in the poultry business. He bred a great many fine fowls, and was a personal friend of mine from as far back as in 1835, when I first met him in the western country. He bought my two first Grays; and from them and a pale silver Cinnamon or drab Shanghae hen (of the Forbes' importation from China) he produced a clutch or two of very nice Light-Gray chickens, some of which he exhibited at the fowl-shows in Boston in 1851 and 1852, portraits of which "Burampootras," taken from the birds and accurately engraved by Fox in 1851, will be found on next page.

These *first* Gray chickens, thus produced by Dr. Bennett, had a small top-knot or slight tuft of feathers at the back of the head; all of them, as will be noticed in this picture of them, on a small scale, published in 1852. Where *this* feature came from, I never knew; but I had no such "disqualification" upon any of my own fowls, first or last; and upon this first lot of Grays *only*, of the doctor's, did I ever see this peculiarity.

* This is not the "Plymouth Rock" of the present day, 1870–74. That is quite a different fowl, and altogether better. *This* bird is recognized in the new American Standard as a variety, or breed. It is a *cross*, however, between the Dominique and the Black Java, originating a few years since in Connecticut and Massachusetts, and is an excellent fowl.

Dr. Bennett continued to breed the Grays, thereafter, very successfully. I furnished him with several other specimens of birds out of the progeny of my first and second lots, which I bred together; and he sent a few of these to England in 1852 "on speculation," to London.

In 1851, Dr. Bennett, Mr. Hatch of Connecticut, and myself all showed the Light-Gray stock in small quantities; and the doctor had for some time been exercising his busy brain to coin "a good *name*" for these fowls. He



DR. BENNETT'S ORIGINAL TRIO OF "BURAMPOOTRAS." DRAWN FROM LIFE IN 1851.

consulted me regarding this proposition; and I always contended for what *I* considered to be their correct cognomen, namely, "Gray Shanghae," for the very good reason already given.

But this title was not sufficiently high-sounding to suit the doctor's views. And so I will here repeat, as I have already communicated it through another channel, precisely what occurred regarding this name for the splendid Gray

Shanghaes, — as it took place in my house. I quote from an article I contributed to Wade's Philadelphia "Fancier's Journal," in March, 1874.

"Dr. John C. Bennett of Plymouth, Mass., in those days a shrewd and enthusiastic breeder of all kinds of fancy fowls, made me a fabulous offer for my pair of "Gray Chittagongs" (the Dr. Kerr Philadelphia birds), and took them away. He bred them with a very light drab or buff Shanghae hen he had, of the Forbes' importation, and produced a clutch of fine, showy chickens, which he exhibited at the second or third Boston fowl-show, to which he desired to give a specific name.

"In those long-ago days, a good name for fowls was 'a big thing' towards success, among fanciers, in disposing of the stock they produced. The doctor first consulted me on this point, and in my own library he took down an atlas. Turning to the Eastern countries, he pored over China, Cochin-China, Hindostan, &c., and his eye lighted upon the Burrampootra River in India.

"'*Eureka!*' cried the amiable doctor, 'I have found it! Here it is, and it's a stunner!'

"And he pointed to that unpronounceable word "Burrampootra" upon the map.

"'What is it?' I quietly asked.

"'The name for my birds. Do you see? Grand, expressive, stylish, capital!' he continued.

"Thus it began. He shortly varied it to 'Brahmah-pootra,' the first portion of this term being the name of the chief deity of the Hindoos. But this compound was too lengthy. Then it was cut short to Brahmah, and finally, by universal approval, became *Brahma*, — a very good name for a very good fowl, though I continued for years to call my stock — precisely like his, and bred originally from the same pair of 'Chittagongs' with the lighter birds I got on shipboard in New York from China — what they really *were*, to wit, 'Gray Shanghaes.'

"This, in brief, is the true history of the original coining of the name 'Brahma.' (The theory set up by one writer, that 'the first pair of Brahmas were brought from Luckipoor up the Brahmapootra River, in a ship to New York, by a sailor' whose name has never been given, is sheer romance and nonsense.)"

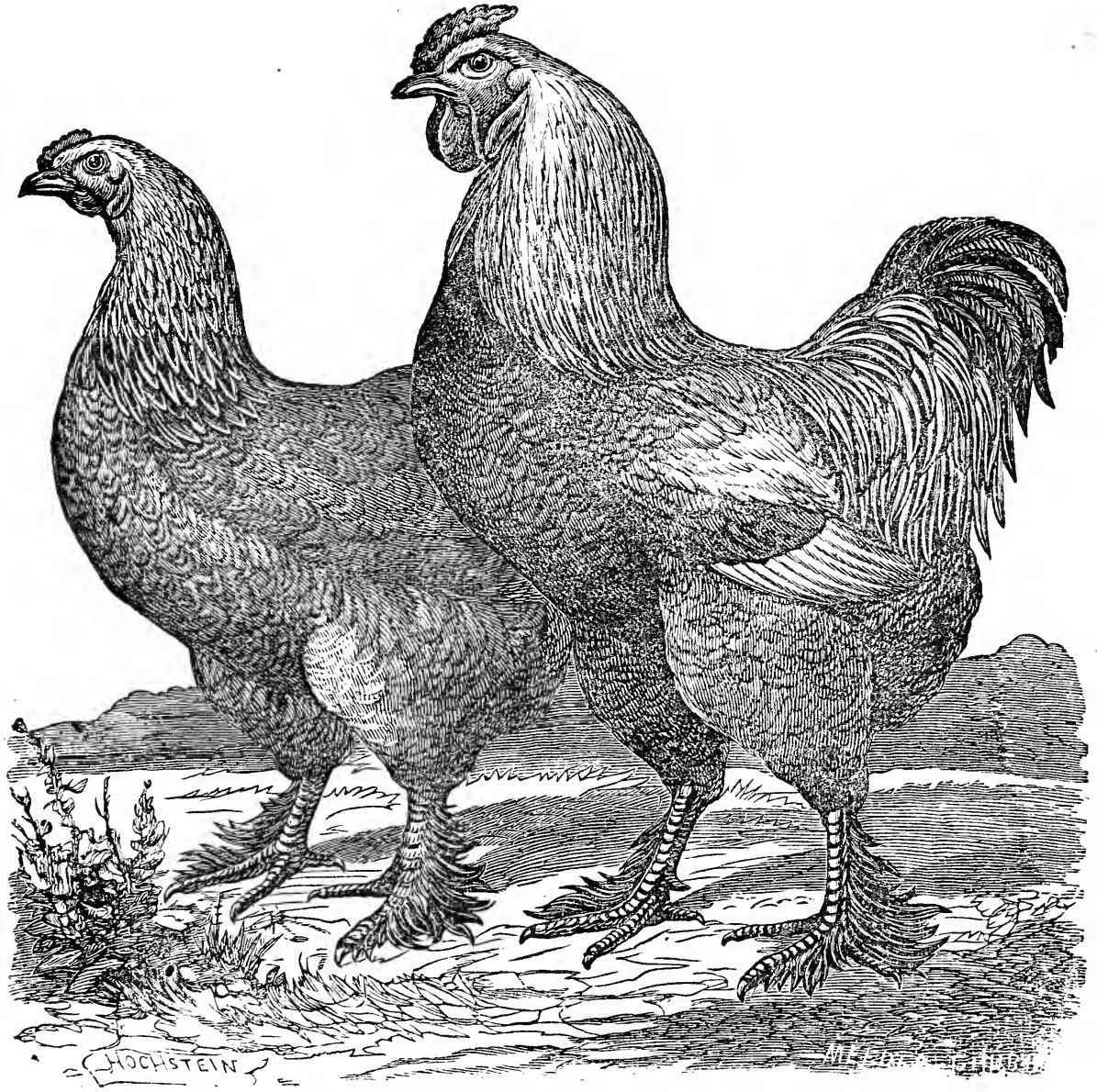
Now, it should be observed just here, that Dr. Bennett's Poultry Book, published by Phillips & Sampson of Boston in 1850, '51, makes no mention whatever of the "Brahmapoutra" or the "Brahma" fowl. He *does* mention the "Gray Chittagong," however; and the illustrations of this breed in his book (which, be it remembered, is of my Philadelphia "Gray Shanghaes") are the

very fowls he afterwards purchased of *me;* which he bred from, and the progeny of which he first called "Burampootras," and subsequently worked down into "Brahmas:" while this further important fact must not be lost sight of just here, also, that, notwithstanding Dr. Bennett published his excellent Poultry Book in 1850 and 1851, this name "Brahma" or "Brahma Poutra" does not appear in its pages at all, and no allusion whatever is made to this name in that work by Dr. Bennett, or to Mr. Cornish's or Chamberlin's existence.

Now, no one has ever disputed or questioned the fact that Dr. Bennett manufactured this name. "Thou canst not say *I* did it!" all others can truthfully exclaim. Nobody takes any credit for this performance originally, save the pleasant, ingenious doctor himself. Most assuredly the writer of these pages never claimed to have applied this cognomen to the Gray Shanghaes. Still there has been some controversy as to *when* these fowls were so named. I have shown that this title was in *no* shape applied till *after* 1851.

Tracing this name with these birds thus, down from 1849 to 1852, the following further corroborative evidence that they were identical, and just what I have now described them, assumes importance, namely: upon page 177, in Wingfield's splendidly illustrated work on poultry, Dr. Wm. Custe Gwynne, in 1853, speaking of the original Light Brahmas sent out by us from America to England, says, "Another circumstance which confirms me in this view as to the identity of these 'Brahmapootra' birds (Bennett's) with the *Shanghae* breed, is the fact that the fowls recently presented to Her Majesty by Mr. G. P. Burnham, under the name of 'Gray Shanghaes,' *are admitted by Dr. Bennett to be precisely similar to his own.* And Mr. Burnham assures me that the original stock from which the 'Gray Shanghaes' presented to Her Majesty were bred was imported direct from Shanghae."

All of which is perfectly correct, as I have herein shown. The fowls I sent to the Queen were bred from the first two Grays received from Philadelphia, which stock Dr. Kerr informed me came from Shanghae,— *and* out of the second lot I got in New York, through Mr. Porter, from on board a ship direct from the port of Shanghae. No *Dark* Brahmas had then been seen, or alluded to. Dr. Bennett's earliest chickens were bred out of that very first Philadelphia pair of Grays; and later birds were bred by him from the *progeny* of that stock, and other younger fowls I supplied him with in 1851 and 1852, and afterwards. He always admitted this. He had no occasion to deny or dis-



AMERICAN DARK BRAHMA COCK AND HEN. "BLACK PRINCE" AND "JOAN."

Prize Birds, bred by Philander Williams, Taunton, Mass.

pute it. The Doctor always gave me credit for what was then exactly true. We differed simply in our opinions as to what *name* this splendid variety should be called by. I adhered to "Gray Shanghae;" and he coined the title of "Burampootra," "Brahma-Poutra," and finally "Brahma," as it *now* stands in England and America.

And this brings me to further authoritative corroborating evidence upon this point, occurring in 1852, and referring directly to the controversy then rife in this country, about the naming of this stock — up to this time all being *Light* Brahmas — to wit: —

At the third or fourth Boston show, in the fall of 1852, the Committee of Judges — consisting of Dr. Eben Wight, Dr. Bennett, Messrs. Andrews, Fussell, and Balch — reported *in extenso*, officially, upon the Chinese varieties. From that Report (of which Dr. Wight was chairman), I take the following extracts, which will show the fanciers of to-day how near the exact truth my statements are, and have been hitherto, in regard to this *naming* of the "Brahma" fowl. This Report, from which I now quote in detail, was made immediately after the Boston exhibition of the "New-England Society for the Improvement of Domestic Poultry," as follows :—

"Your Committee would call your attention to the fact that, among the numerous fowls exhibited this season, as upon former occasions (notably in 1851), a very unnecessary practice seems to have obtained, in the mis*naming* of varieties. Cross-bred fowls have been called by original cognomens unknown to practical breeders; and a host of birds well known to the Committee have been denominated by any other than their *real* conceded ornithological titles. This leads to ridicule, and should not be sanctioned by your Society. Many honest, careful breeders may thus be deceived; and this multiplying of *unpronounceable* and *meaningless names* for domestic fowls is entirely uncalled for. Your Committee recommend a close adherence, hereafter, to recognized titles only, . . . and allude to a case in point.

"The largest, and unquestionably one of the finest varieties ever shown among us, was entered by the owner of this variety as the 'Chittagong.' Other coops, *of the same stock*, were labelled 'Gray Chittagong;' others (same stock) were called 'Bramah Pootras;' and others, 'Gray Shanghaes.'

"Your Committee are divided in opinion as to what these birds ought rightfully to be called; but the majority of the Committee have *no* idea that 'Bramah Pootra' is their correct title. . . . Several of the specimens are positively known to have come direct from Shanghae; and *none* are known

to have come originally from anywhere else. For the present, however, the Committee accept for them the title of 'Gray Shanghae,' 'Chittagong,' or 'Bramah Pootra,' as different breeders may elect,— admitting that they are *a* very superior bird, and believing . . . they will be found decidedly *the* most valuable among all the large *Chinese* breeds, of which they are clearly *a* good variety."

This is quoted accurately from the Report published in 1852, when several parties showed the Light-Gray stock, in competition, under the different *names* above indicated. But the Committee of Judges — who saw at a glance that all the birds were identical in color, shape, and characteristics — deemed it but just to comment as they thus did upon this unwarrantable diversity of cognomen for *the same* stock.

Now, all these four thus severally-*named* varieties, to wit, the "Chittagongs," the "Gray Chittagongs," the "Brahma Pootras," and the "Gray Shanghaes," were then unquestionably my original fowls and their descendants. There was at that time no question about this fact; and *three* of these very lots we all positively knew were mine, or out of my stock. These "Chittagongs," as I have already stated, were entered at this show by G. W. George of Haverhill, and were the original Gray Philadelphia (Dr. Kerr) pair, then three years old. Mr. George purchased them of Dr. Bennett, to whom, as I have said, *I* first sold them. The "Gray Chittagongs," then so called, were contributed by a Mr. Hatch, and were said to have been bred in Connecticut. The "Brahma Pootras" were Dr. Bennett's, first shown the year before as chickens bred from my fowls, as we were all aware, but thus so named by the Doctor. The "Gray Shanghaes" were *my* contributions (sixty-four specimens in all), three years old, two years old, one year old, and chickens, bred from the two original Grays, *and* my second imported five lighter Gray fowls; — the first from Dr. Kerr, the second through Wm. T. Porter.

And, up to *that* time, no other such Light-Gray fowls had been seen, or were anywhere else known to exist, in this country. These were identical in color, form, beauty, size, and general characteristics; and all were *single*-combed birds, as far as any of us observed.

The chairman of the Committee, from whose official report I have last quoted, Dr. Eben Wight of Dedham, Mass., was a gentleman above reproach or suspicion, in every respect, who could not have been induced, upon

any consideration whatever, to have given his name or sanction to any assertion that he did not *know* to be just and truthful. He said "all these fowls were identical;" that "they were out of the *same* stock;" that "several of the specimens were positively known to have come from Shanghae, direct;" that "none of them were known to have come from anywhere else;" that "they were *a* good variety of the *Chinese* fowl;" that "they were *the* largest and finest fowls *ever* shown among us;" and, though the Committee were not then prepared to accord them a specific name, yet "the majority of the Committee had *no* idea that 'Brahma Pootra' was the rightfully proper title" for any of them.

Dr. Wight was one of the oldest importers then known in America, and a very careful, conscientious man. He then bred no Gray fowls of any description. He could have had no possible object, save to do justice to all parties, in this Report. And his language on this occasion was not only forcible and clear, but it was truthful, just, and reasonable, as well as unequivocal.

After this exhibition, the name of "Brahmah Pootra" was adopted by Dr. Bennett, in spite of my own arguments, and the advice of others who were opposed to this "multiplying of meaningless names" for varieties of fowls; and in this shape it went out to England. In course of time it came to be reduced to Brahmah; and finally, as I have said, to Brahma. But the *fowls* underwent no change. In England also they came to be called "Brahmas;" and the very fowls I sent to Her Majesty, the receipt of which were acknowledged by Hon. Col. Phipps, the Queen's secretary, as "magnificent Gray Shanghaes," were the following season exhibited by His Royal Highness Prince Albert, at the Birmingham Show (in 1853), as "Brahmas." And so, after 1854, they came generally to be called by this accepted and acceptable title, though not so by *me* for some years.

In order to show how incorrect is the statement made by Mr. Cornish in 1869 (see Wright's "Illustrated Book of Poultry," page 241), that "the name of Brahma was established in 1850" (!), I set these recorded facts down here; and in confirmation of this I add that the first American "National Poultry Society" in this country gave two annual exhibitions (in 1854, '55) in New York, at Barnum's Museum; the proprietor of which establishment, Phineas T. Barnum, Esq., was president of this society, "assisted by forty managers," — so ran the prospectus published at its formation.

The first exhibition of this National Association occurred in the winter of 1854, and proved a great success. I was there with my Light and Dark Gray Shanghaes, and other Chinese fowls, and carried away a score of the leading premiums with my variously-colored China breeds, old and young. A. B. Allen, Esq., the famous cattle-breeder of Western New-York State, in "The American Agriculturist," thus wrote of this fine Poultry Show: —

"This great show at Barnum's, contrary to general expectation, brought out altogether the finest, largest, and choicest exhibition ever witnessed in America. Of their kinds, there were scarcely a pair of inferior birds in this vast collection; and many fowls came five hundred miles for this occasion. This very fact showed that poultry fanciers within striking distance of New York had confidence in the Society, in its managers" (I was one of the forty), "in the ability of Mr. Barnum to carry it out, and in his integrity, &c.

"As an evidence of the interest then felt among fanciers of all ranks and all fortunes, they sent their birds, attended themselves, and took a lively interest in every thing that appertained to the proceedings. We saw there highly distinguished scientific gentlemen, lawyers, statesmen of great repute, grave divines 'wise with the lore of centuries,' merchants, commercial men called by way of eminence 'millionaires,' artisans, farmers, gentlemen, — singly, or with their wives and daughters and little children, all eagerly threading their way through and by each other, to gaze at the coops and cages, intent on seeing every thing, examining a great many birds, and not once only, but repeatedly, day after day, during the show, did we see some of the same individuals, groups, and families.

"Now, this means something. People would not congregate at this inclement season, from fifty to five hundred miles distant, to witness a 'chicken show' in New York, unless there was 'something in it.' *There is something in it.* There is a study in it. It is a delightful contemplation in natural history. These beautiful birds are a thing to love, to interest young minds, and old ones too. They are among the things to make country life interesting, to attach people to home, and make it pleasanter than all the world beside," &c.

Thus wrote Mr. A. B. Allen in 1854, about the "National Association" and its first show of fowls at New York. And, even at that period, it was charged that "G. P. Burnham of Gray Shanghae notoriety was stoutly contending against the establishment of the name 'Brahma Pootra' for the popular Light-Gray fowls being so largely bred in America," which name had not even *then* been adopted, not to say "established," by us!

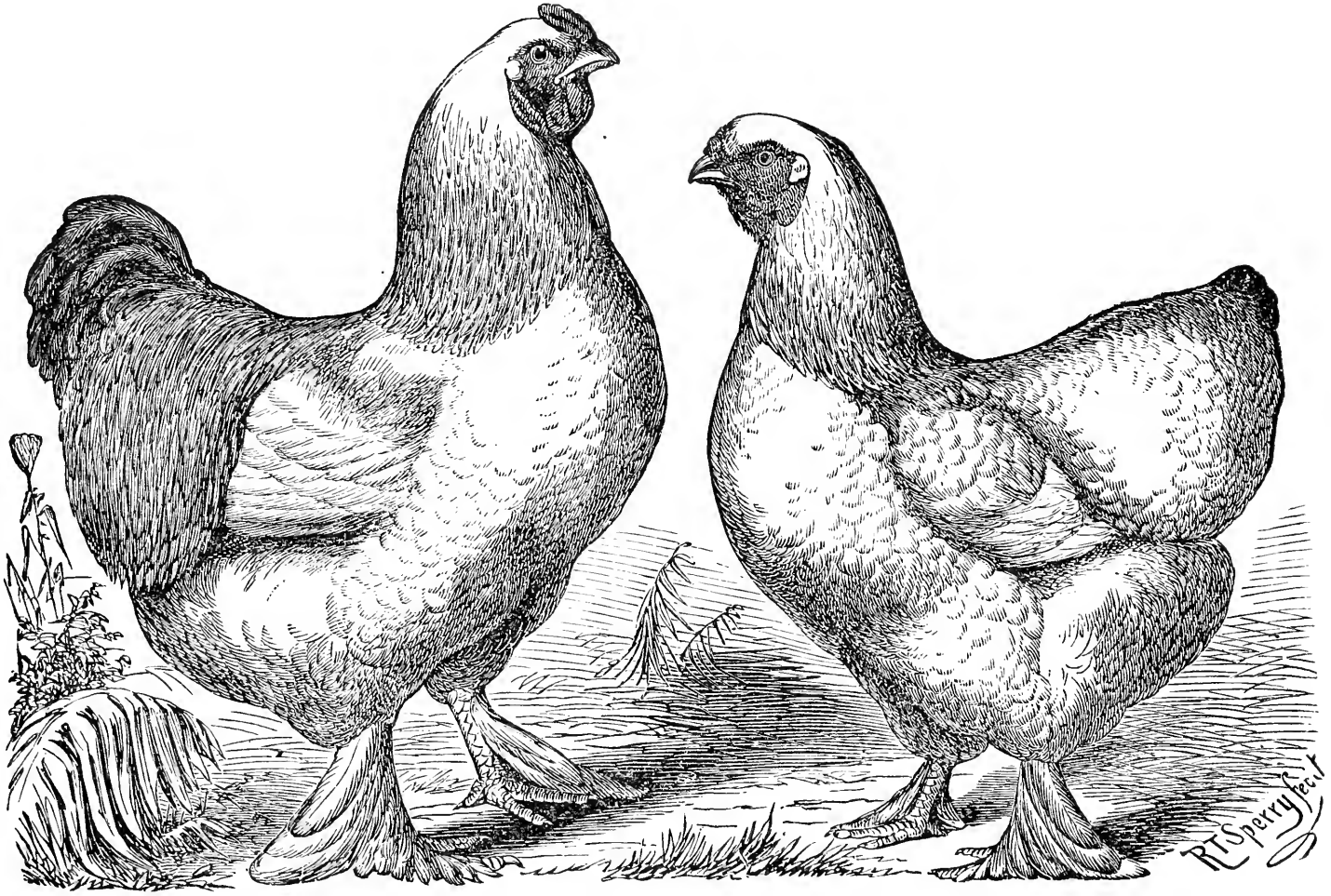
A full-page cut (see page 78) gives us a drawing of a mature cock and hen of the "Chamberlin stock," so called, as bred by Mr. Emory Carpenter and others in Connecticut. The bodies, plumage, and general outline of this pair are good representations of modern Light Brahmas. The color is shown as being considerably darker than the average birds of the light variety, nowadays; yet it is very nearly the tint of feathering that characterized my best early Gray Shanghaes. This pair are too short in the leg for good breeding stock; but, as we had the pleasure of examining Mr. Carpenter's fine fowls at Hartford, recently, we can vouch for the fact that his Brahmas are not thus deficient. We have rarely seen better-fashioned broods of this race than the samples we were shown upon Mr. Carpenter's spacious premises, this season, the generous *size* of which is especially notable.

The admirable drawings, by Ludlow, of W. H. Todd's beautiful Light and Dark Brahmas (see plates on pages 65 and 81) give us a truthful idea of the general character and appearance of those two well-bred American varieties, up to standard, in points. This cock and hen in each picture are from photographs of the winning fowls portrayed; and Mr. Todd is well known as a leading successful Western breeder (at Vermillion, O.), who has turned out, in the past few years, some of the finest samples of both Light and Dark Brahmas that have ever been produced in this country.

In *all* the varieties of Chinese fowls which Mr. Todd has placed in his breeding-runs, this gentleman has procured the best stock that money could purchase; and his good taste and large experience have enabled him to make the choicest selections attainable, both in this country and in England.

The illustration, page 72, of Philander Williams's American-bred Dark Brahmas (younger birds, not fully developed in proportions when pictured) also shows a fine pair of these symmetrical and favorite fowls.

The English Dark Brahma cock, figured on page 86, is described in the London "Poultry Review" as a bird of great rarity. It is stated that "ten of his brother and sister chicks carried off cups in 1872, at the British shows, this cock being the flower of the flock." Mr. Lingwood refused 250 guineas ($1,250) for him and his five brothers, and 50 guineas ($250) for himself, alone. Choice Brahma fowls *must* be "taking their place in the front," in England, indeed. Yet such a bird as this is for a "Dark Brahma" — with his monumental tail and fearful "hock" — could never win among first-class American competitors, assuredly.



LIGHT BRAHMA COCK AND HEN, AS BRED IN CONNECTICUT, 1873.

Although — as I look at the question of the origin of the Brahma fowl — any *new* theory that may be promulgated in 1874 can possess no material weight, and can have no effect upon what was so clearly written, discussed, and published nearly a quarter of a century ago, in all its confirmatory particulars, yet I cannot pass by without notice the account of Mr. C. C. Plaisted, published in June, 1874, in "The Poultry World;" because Mr. Plaisted in his "history" states much that is true, and all that he himself *believes*, undoubtedly, but at the same time some points which are clearly incorrect. And here I insert an article from a Kensington (Penn.) correspondent of Wade's "Fancier's Journal" of a late date, which will explain itself; with the single remark that Kensington (a part of Philadelphia) was the former residence of Dr. J. J. Kerr, of whom in 1849 I obtained my first pair of Gray Shanghaes, and who sent Dr. Bennett also, in 1850, a trio of these birds, that Doctor Kerr thought "quite equal to Mr. Burnham's," &c.

"KENSINGTON, June 8, 1874.

"*Mr. Editor*, — I noticed in a poultry magazine, lately, by a Mr. Plaisted, in a long story he tells about the origin of Brahma-Pootra fowls, the statement, that 'G. P. Burnham, Esq., of Melrose, Mass., claims that he had the *first* in New England;' that 'a ship came to New York at just the right time for him to secure a new importation of these Gray Shanghaes,' as he calls them, 'to add to his already choice stock *that were never seen until after the exhibition of* 1851' in Boston.

"This writer claims that he attempts nothing only to state *facts*, just as they existed. But, as he was formerly a partner in the chicken-trade with Dr. John C. Bennett, of famous 'Burrampootra' notoriety, it is a little strange that he doesn't (?) know that said Dr. Bennett published his well-known 'Poultry Book' in 1850, with appendix (second edition) in 1851, in which Mr. Burnham's splendid *first* Gray Shanghaes (there called Chittagongs by the doctor) are both fully described and illustrated as 'most remarkable for size and beauty.' And, in appendix, the doctor adds, 'We have just received from Dr. Kerr, Philadelphia (the same party Burnham got *his* first ones from), some of these imperial birds;' and Dr. Kerr writes, 'They are quite equal to Mr. Burnham's.' . . . 'This is enough,' adds Dr. Bennett, 'to have said more would have been a work of supererogation.'

"This in 1850, '51, by Dr. Bennett himself — this man Plaisted's business partner, who writes, in the same article I quote from, that *he* (Plaisted) got a lot of somebody else's Gray stock in 1851, which were the Simon Pure; but in reference to which fowls not a syllable is printed in Dr. Bennett's 'Poultry Book,' issued that year, and which stock nobody then knew any thing about!

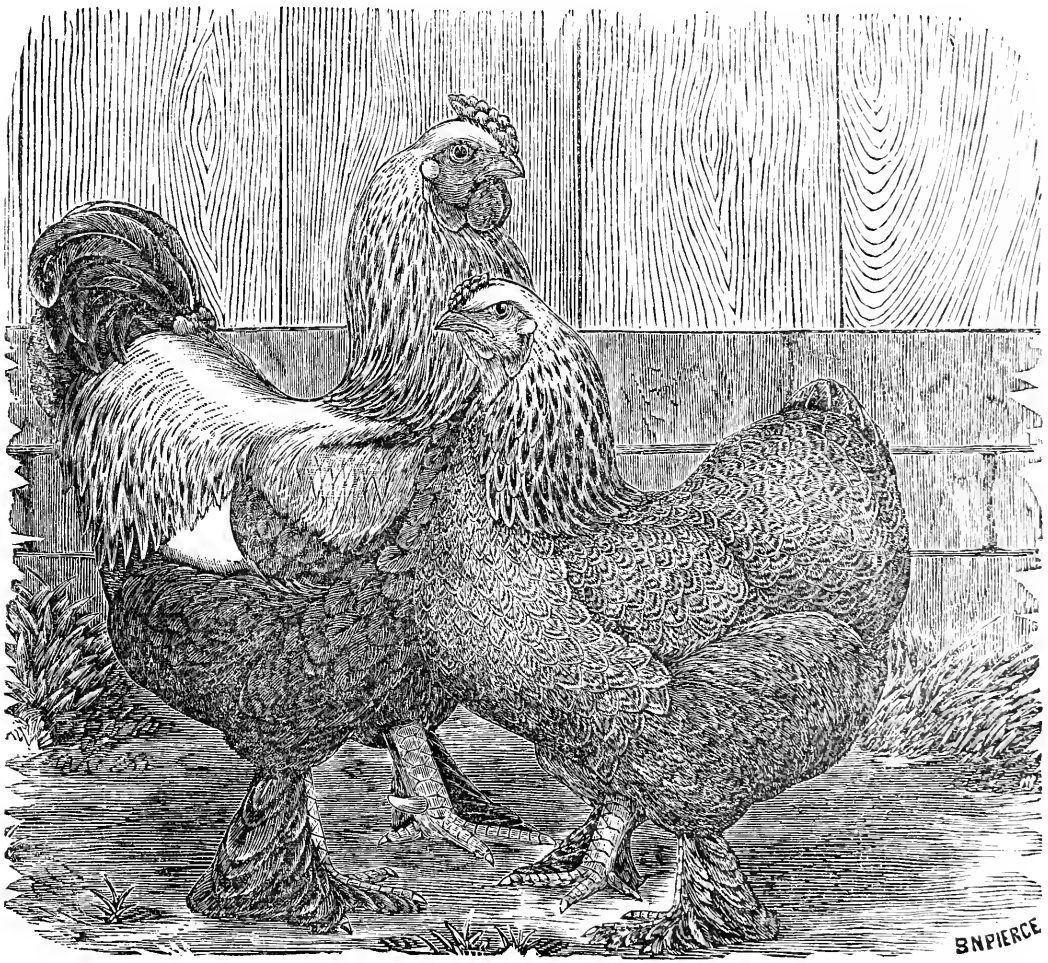
"I think it must be the *other* stock that Mr. Plaisted says 'were never seen till after the 1851 exhibition.' For how could Burnham's fine Gray fowls have been thus pictured and so elaborately described in Dr. Bennett's work in 1850 and '51, unless they had been seen previously? as they had been, and admired by thousands, 'the wonder of all poultry-fanciers who behold them,' as Dr. Bennett puts it (see his book). Or, *if* the Plaisted fowls were then known, why didn't *Bennett* know and say something about them in his very comprehensive 'Poultry Book' issued at that time?"

The query embodied in the above-quoted article is pertinent; but the advocates of the Cornish-Brahma origin theory are all similarly at fault in their dates. Now, in reference to "some of the earliest Light Brahmas," which Wright says, "Mr. Burnham sent to Her Majesty in 1852," I have simply to state that the cage of fowls I sent to the Queen was duly labelled, in large printed capitals, "EIGHT GRAY SHANGHAES." I wrote a brief note to His Royal Highness, Prince Albert, in 1852, for Her Majesty, — which Hon. Mr. Ingersoll (then American Minister to the Court of St. James) kindly forwarded, — in which "I respectfully tendered to Her Majesty a cage of Gray Shanghae fowls, bred from my stock imported into America from China, three years since;" and the Queen, through the Hon. Mr. Secretary Phipps, "acknowledged and accepted this magnificent present of Gray Shanghaes," and subsequently sent me her portrait, a photographed copy of which adorns this volume (see frontispiece).

Mr. Wright continuously evinces a lamentable ignorance of the *real* characteristics of what is now known as the Brahma fowl. We have it upon very recent English authority, in two instances (from reliable persons of his own neighborhood, who know him individually), that "American poultry-men appear to be Wright-mad, in quoting his opinions," &c.; that "this man never had anything but English Dark Brahmas, and, in breeding, he has accomplished absolutely nothing with *them*, even, as compared with Horace Lingwood, Mr. Boyle, Mr. Teebay, and many others."

Again, in his last work, 1872, '73, Wright says, "the pea-comb is the *original* American type;" which statement is known by everybody to be a gross error; for, as all of us are aware, the Light Gray fowls were bred here three or four years, at least, before this peculiarity was discovered or spoken of at all. "Still," he adds in the same paragraph, "there were, till very lately, some splendid yards of *single*-comb Light Brahmas in England, which would

run English competitors closely" for the premiums offered at the shows there. Himself thus admitting that, until a *recent* date, even, there were not a few "splendid yards" of the *single*-comb variety of Light Brahmas to be seen in Wright's own neighborhood, — London.



DARK BRAHMA COCK AND HEN, BRED BY C. H. KENEGY, POLO, ILL.

Mr. C. C. Plaisted of Hartford, Conn., who is now an earnest advocate of pea-comb birds only, — and who asserts with great assurance that the strain of Chamberlin-Bennett Light Brahmas *he* breeds will throw the triple comb

almost invariably, — thus expresses himself in Sept. 1874, in a poultry monthly, upon this Brahma comb question. He says, "More than three-fourths of the Brahmas which I bred, to 1861, had the pea-comb; since that time I have had but one single-combed bird. I do not claim that single combs and smooth legs are marks of impurity in this breed; but it is certain that breeders of them are behind the times, now. I am by no means the only breeder in the country who has come to look upon the pea-comb as a settled thing with the Brahmas; but to obtain it on *all*, in perfection, is something not yet accomplished, for this triple comb takes many forms."

Another English writer, as late as in 1866, affirms, that, "of the Light Brahmas imported from America, and carefully bred in his hands, fully half of his chickens showed the single comb; and especially," he adds, "is this formation observable in the cocks raised in my runs."

An American fancier in Massachusetts, who has produced some of the finest specimens reared in New England in the past twelve years, frankly states in a leading poultry journal, in 1867, that he "has found the single comb cropping out on one-fourth of the best Brahma fowls — otherwise well pointed — bred in *his* experience." It is most certainly the fact that all breeders of the *Light* variety, from whatever "strain" it may come, have bred and continue to breed, to-day, more or less single combs. Mr. Plaisted is correct, however, that breeders of single-combed birds, alone, would be "behind the times." And a smooth-limbed Brahma would indeed be highly objectionable! But the single *and* pea-comb were both a characteristic of the original stock, and this result is inevitable — at least at present.

With the *Dark* Brahmas, this "deviation" in the comb formation has not been frequent. Most of this variety come with the pea-comb well developed; and the single comb with *these* is decidedly the exception, not the rule; as has been the case from the outset.

Mr. Wright stoutly contends, that the pea-comb *only* is the true indication of "genuine blood," however. And, notwithstanding this theorist's mixed opinions, in other respects regarding the prominent points in the Brahma fowl, and his vehement partiality for the pea-comb *only* as an "indispensable proof of purity" in the strain, he acknowledges in his latest work, that, up to quite recently (see his new "Illustrated Book of Poultry"), he knew "several fine yards of *single*-combed Light Brahmas in England that would

run some of the present exhibitors a close race for our prizes." Again, in his "Brahma Fowl" book, he says (p. 62), "the originals had both single *and* pea combs," while Dr. Bennett says, "the single comb is the *usual* form."

Inasmuch as the pea-comb on Brahmas is a very desirable thing to attain, this feature has become imperative, for competition in the show-pens; and every fancier strives to breed as large a proportion of pea-comb specimens as is possible in his flocks, in accordance with *Standard* requirements in this regard, at the present time.

I never knew this point to be publicly discussed until after 1853. In that year, I find in the Rev. W. Wingfield's elegant "London Poultry Book" the following paragraphs, which I quote from that standard work, pages 175 to 178, on this "pea-comb question." (I will say just here that Mr. Plaisted, in the June "Poultry World," says that "all the Light Brahmas shipped by Dr. Bennett and himself to England were bred by them or Mr. Hatch," &c., from the Cornish-Chamberlin fowls, "except *the* pair sent to Dr. Gwynne by Dr. Bennett himself" in 1852.) Dr. Gwynne says, in the work I now quote from, "I obtained from Dr. Bennett of the United States *five* pairs of these birds: three of these ten fowls, only, had small compressed or pea combs, — a feature strikingly characteristic of the Malay fowl." . . . "In none of the other seven birds was this peculiarity found; nor could I recognize in them any thing, either in points or conformation, but what would be found in *Shanghae* birds of the same age." Be it observed here, that Dr. Gwynne's fowls were from Dr. Bennett of the United States — five pairs (not one pair, as Mr. Plaisted has it); that Dr. Bennett bred, with Mr. Plaisted, Hatch, Smith, and others, only "Nelson H. Chamberlin-Cornish fowls;" and that out of ten fowls of this strain so sent to Dr. William Custe Gwynne in England, in 1852, only *three* then showed this pea-comb.

Further on in this same Mr. Wingfield's volume, I find the following statement of Dr. Gwynne, to whom I never sold a bird of my stock, but who received in England, and bred, only the Cornish, Chamberlin, Bennett and Plaisted strain, which Messrs. Felch, and other good "old breeders" of Light Brahmas in Massachusetts to-day claim are genuine, because they breed this coveted "pea-comb." In further reference to which, Dr. Gwynne writes, in 1852, '53, thus (see Rev. Mr. Wingfield's work, pp. 176, 177): —

"The *single* comb would appear to be the *usual* form of that feature in

the Brahmapootra fowls; though, as Dr. Bennett admits, the true breed do *sometimes* present these deviations." . . . "In response to which," replies Dr. Gwynne, "I can only say, that, out of twenty chickens bred by the birds I reserved for myself (obtained of Dr. Bennett), I cannot detect a single instance of this 'deviation' from the *single* combs of the *parents;*" which parents Dr. Gwynne and Dr. Bennett then, and Mr. Plaisted lately, all affirm were sent to England, from the latter two gentlemen, to Dr. Gwynne, out of the Cornish-Chamberlin-Connecticut stock, in 1852, '53, "which should show only the 'pea-comb,' if they be pure bred."

"But," adds Dr. Gwynne, on same page, "another circumstance which confirms me in my view as to the identity of these birds with the *Shanghaes* is the fact that the fowls recently presented to Her Majesty the Queen by Mr. Burnham, under the name of 'Gray Shanghaes,' are admitted by Dr. Bennett" (who sent him this Cornish-Chamberlin stock) "*to be precisely similar to his own;*" while "Mr. Burnham assures me that the original stock from which the 'Gray Shanghaes' he presented to Her Majesty were bred was imported direct from Shanghae," China, not *India.* And my fowls sent to the Queen in 1852, I am quite confident, showed only the single comb; though, among the pullets, the pea-comb *might* have existed, at that early day, without my observing it; since this question had at that time been but very little discussed, or this peculiar comb-formation noticed, among us in America.

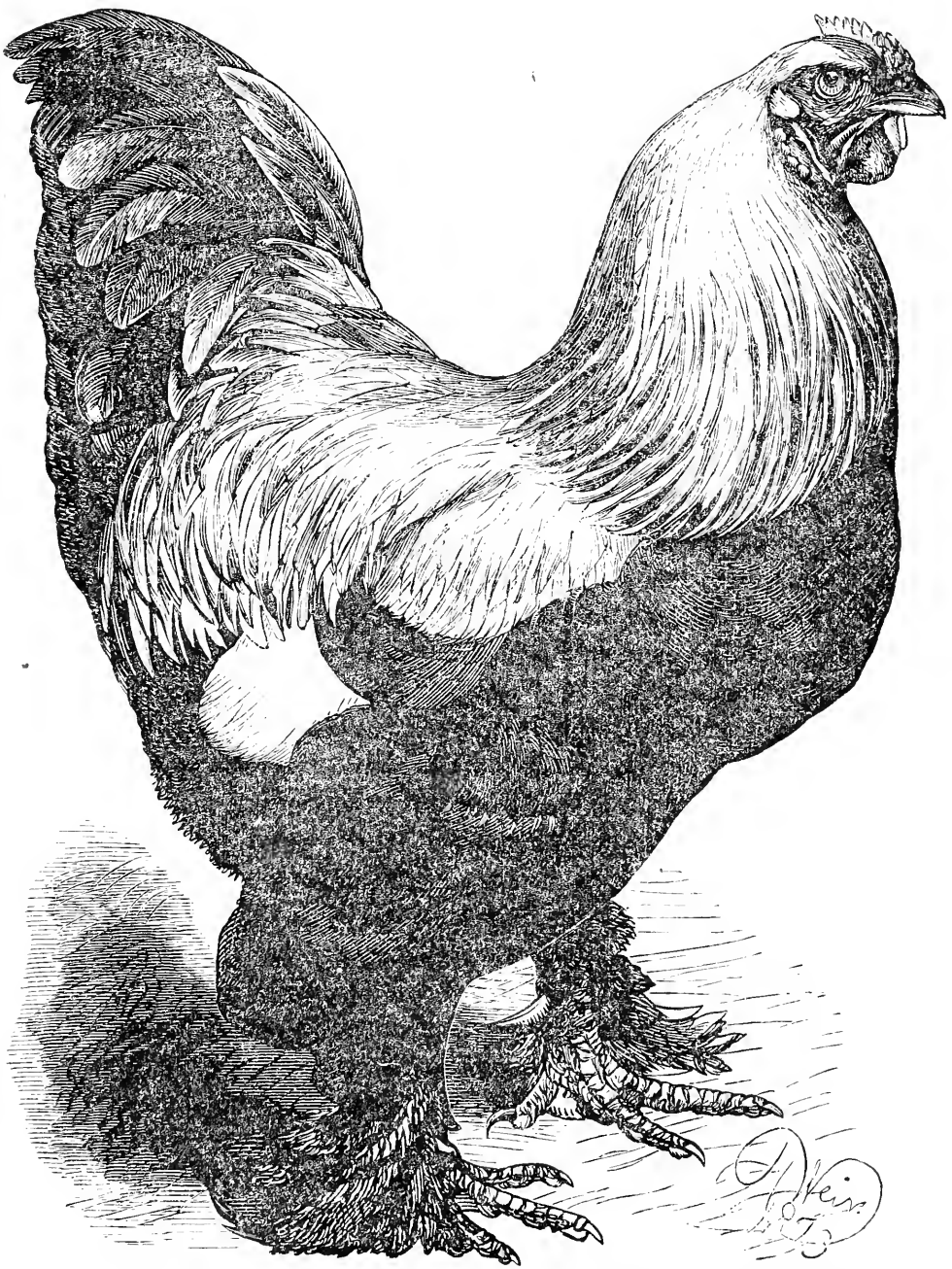
Two fowls, sent to Mrs. Hozier Williams about this time, by Dr. Bennett, had the pea-comb, I think; when Dr. Bennett immediately wrote that, "though the *usual* form of that feature was *single*, the true breed of Brahmapootras do *sometimes* present this deviation" of the triple or pea-comb. Thus it will be seen that all our stock in the early years showed both styles of comb, the single comb then predominating largely in my birds, as well as in the claimed Cornish-Chamberlin strain alike, though Bennett declares, in 1852, that "the single comb is the *usual* form of this feature in the Brahmapootra fowl," and that "the true bird" (whatever that was or is) "do *sometimes* only present the deviation" of the pea-comb; which authoritative statement, in 1853, by Dr. Bennett (Mr. Plaisted's partner), simply goes to confirm the notable fact that at that period no one among the Cornish-Chamberlin pure Brahma breeders knew much about this "little joker," the pea-comb.

Mr. Teebay says, in Tegetmeier's choice "Poultry Book," in 1867, "The head of the Brahmas should be surmounted with a triple comb, known as the pea-comb." . . . "But when first introduced into England, many of the Brahmas had single combs. At present, those with the pea-combs are held in higher estimation." The editor of "The Poultry Yard," Miss Watts, says, "The only difficult point is the variety of comb in the Brahmapootras, viz., the pea-comb *and* the single. While we give the preference to the former, we do not see why both may not be pure, as in the Dorkings" (which show the rose and the single upright comb, constantly).

Other writers agree upon the point that single and pea-comb birds among *any* "original" strain of Brahmas, or Gray Shanghaes, have *both* from the outset been, and are now, bred more or less in every man's yard in this country and in England. But the pea-comb variety is the most desirable, as I have said, the only one now admissible in the show-room, under *Standard* rules, in competition for prizes, and this is being nowadays far more generally bred than the single-comb birds.

But, for any sensible fancier who has really had a goodly experience with these Gray fowls, to assume, in the light of to-day, that he breeds or meets with in his breeding *only* "pea-comb birds" from either Burnham's or Chamberlin's or Hatch's or Bennett's or anybody else's stock, is entirely unwarranted by all experience or previous facts in this case; and such assertions cannot be entertained for a moment by any one who "knows the ropes" in this Brahmapootra-Shanghae business, from the start, as I do.

The pea-comb is the preferable one. The single-comb birds are and should be discarded. But when, from any strain, only the pea-combs are produced, uniformly and unexceptionally, and I can be convinced of this fact, I want a dozen fowls of that established, perfect, never-deviating breed of Brahmas or Gray Shanghaes, upon my premises; for which I will gladly pay their owner, for the transfer of said stock to my yards, ten times the sum that any purchaser in America will pay for them; since, though I have had no difficulty in preserving the *color* of my stock, in its shades of light and dark (never once having bred from my Gray Shanghaes a *buff* fowl, as some old Brahma breeders say they have from *their* strains), I have not been so fortunate, in my five-and-twenty years' experience with this race, as to be able to avoid breeding both the single and the pea-combs, in my flocks; and this, too, from the very beginning down to the year 1874. While, at this time, I venture



HORACE LINGWOOD'S ENGLISH PRIZE "DARK BRAHMA" COCK, BRED IN 1872.

further to predict, that the day is not far distant, when, upon other colored Shanghae varieties, or "Cochins" as we all now call them, this pea-comb will be bred universally, in preference to the single combs; as I know, just now, it is being successfully established by one American breeder, in perfection, in Massachusetts,* upon the splendid "Partridge Cochins;" and this adornment for the head of *both* varieties of the Brahmas, it needs not to be repeated, is the only style of comb that fanciers should breed, to be in the fashion. Single-comb Brahmas have no value nowadays for the shows.

In all the public discussions, the Cornish-Chamberlin-Bennett theory advocates avoid alluding to the superb *Dark* variety of "Brahmas" which I first sent out to Europe, in 1853. None of these men refer to *this* splendid strain, which at once surprised and interested English breeders as intensely as had the beautiful early *Light* birds I sent to the Queen, &c. My *Dark* Grays were as fine as the Light, and were originally produced after an experimentally-studied union of my two imported Gray Shanghae strains, and have thousands of ardent admirers to-day; though efforts have been made in England to improve upon the originals, in the specimens latterly sent back from Great Britain, in the shape of fowls they there call "Dark Brahmas," but which so very frequently show the vulture hock, and are tainted in color with *brown* or *buff* feathering, instead of carrying the unrivalled pure steel-gray plumage that *alone* characterized my original birds; which defects plainly exhibit the English *crossing* with the Buff or Partridge Cochin, or with both, as well as with that far more objectionable nuisance introduced on the other side of the water, and which can *never* be bred off of their birds, — to wit, the unsightly "*hock*" upon the thighs, as is seen upon the cock, opposite.

A somewhat extensive Light Brahma breeder in Massachusetts, who contends that only the pea-comb shows itself upon *his* breeding stock, which he traces back to the "pure Chamberlin" strain, has recently written a lengthy treatise for a public journal, about breeding a "hocked" cock to Light pullets, for some purpose or other. Now, this "vulture hock" is an English invention, altogether. It has been known in this country but a few years; and upon the *original* Gray birds it was not seen till long after we had sent our birds across the Atlantic. Neither in the Dark nor the Light Brahmas was

* Full-page illustrations of this choice *new* variety are given in this work. See pp. 133 and 143.

it ever discovered till the British fanciers had tried their experiments with the early stock, to "improve" what a Yankee fancier had first so nearly perfected, at the start. But this crossing in with hocked birds was one of their attempts to increase the leg-feathering in England.

Never upon my stock, bred by itself, was seen *the falcon hock*, — this villanous excrescence, first experimented with by English breeders, to add to the feathering on the shanks and "middle toes." Upon the modern English Dark Brahmas this offensive appendage is now of the commonest occurrence. It is in this blood, only; and I have seen no yards of the English Dark variety latterly among us that are not generously dotted with this blemish in the flocks. The lauded prize cock, figured upon page 86, belonging to Mr. Lingwood, a recent champion-bird in England of this class, it will be observed, shows a monstrous hock; and yet he is considered one of the finest "Dark Brahma" cocks in Great Britain, and won first and cup at the leading shows there, in two past seasons, against all comers. But this "hock-feathering," in either color, surely never cropped out upon *my* birds, if purely bred, either in England or America, as every fancier will bear me witness.

Thus much for my original-imported and American-bred Brahmas. To go back a little, in justice to other parties, having now stated my own case as I conceive, fairly, and just as it existed from 1848, '49 to 1852, '53, '54, I give place to the following account, which was first published from Mr. Virgil Cornish of Connecticut at a later period; though the letter I am about to quote was *dated* March 2, 1852, and ran as follows: —

"No doubt you are acquainted with the relative position of the State in India called *Chittagong*, and the River Brahmapootra. Chittagong is on the eastern border, bounding west on the Bay of Bengal. The Brahmapootra River empties into that bay. *If* the Brahmapootra fowls came from that region, of which I think there is no doubt, still I am unable to say by which *name* they should be called with certainty." . . . "In regard to the history of these fowls," continues Mr. Cornish in this same letter, "very little is known. A mechanic by the name of Chamberlin (in Hartford, Conn.,) first brought them here. Mr. Chamberlin was acquainted with a sailor, who informed him that there were *three* pairs of large imported fowls in New York." (*When* this occurred, is not stated.) "But this sailor dwelt so much upon the size of these fowls, that Mr. Chamberlin furnished him with money, and directed him to go to New York and purchase a pair

of them for him; which he did, at a great expense." (Of *whom* this sailor bought this stray pair of Grays, is not known.) But "the sailor *reported* that he *found* one pair of gray ones, which he purchased." (*Where*, nobody has ever stated.) "The second pair was dark-colored, and the third pair was red," continues Mr. Cornish. "The man in New York, whose name I have not got, gave no account of their origin, except that they had been brought by some sailors in the India ships. The parties through whom the fowls came, as far back as I have been able to trace them, are all obscure men." This was Mr. Cornish's first frank statement.

Thus far, not much has been made out, as is evident, by Mr. Cornish in this account; though he unreservedly states that "very little is known to him of their origin," any way. Most certainly, there is no evidence here that this pair of gray fowls, which Mr. Chamberlin gave *a* sailor money in Hartford to go to New York to buy, were "imported" birds at all. Mr. Cornish simply claims that Mr. Chamberlin says he "sent a sailor with money to New York," and "this sailor *reported* that he *found* a pair of light-gray fowls (somewhere), which he purchased." But, as he probably did *not* go to New York; and, as neither this sailor, Mr. Chamberlin, nor Mr. Cornish then informs us of *whom* these fowls were obtained; *where* the sailor found them; *when* they came into New York; whether they were old or young birds; what the name of the ship (or "ships") was; who "the sailors that brought them in the India ships" were; who "the man in New York, that could give no account of their origin," was; nor yet one word about the identity of "the parties through whose hands the fowls came," except that "all are obscure men," — this extraordinarily indefinite account is indeed suspicious! This is Mr. Cornish's simple tale, however, at that time; and he is entitled to the full benefit of his statement, which some one thus repeated to him.

Further on, this same letter from Mr. Cornish says, "I obtained my stock *from the original pair brought here by Mr. Chamberlin.*" Not from Mr. Chamberlin, but "from the stock *brought here by* Mr. C." Now, it is clearly stated previously in this letter, that "*a sailor* brought these fowls to Hartford." Mr. Chamberlin "sent a sailor to New York, who *reported* he had found a pair, which *he* purchased." However, Mr. Cornish thus proceeds: "These fowls were named 'Chittagong' by Mr. Chamberlin, on account of their resemblance, in some degree, to the fowls then in the country called by

that name. The description of these fowls exactly corresponds with that given by travellers and sea-captains," (who? and when?) "of the large light-colored fowls found in the valley of the Brahmapootra, &c.," concludes Mr. Cornish, in his letter.

The stock shown by Mr. Hatch at the Boston exhibition in 1852 (and I *think* in 1851 also), spoken of by Dr. Eben Wight in the Committee's Report I have lately quoted from, — *then* called "Gray Chittagongs," — were said to have been bred from this Chamberlin or Cornish stock, which came to Connecticut in 1849, *viâ a* sailor, *viâ* a mechanic, *viâ* New York, *viâ* Hartford, "in the India ships," *viâ* the hands of "all obscure men." And so we never knew, and can certainly *now* never know, any thing further about *this* "pair of Light Grays." Yet such is the sailor's and Mr. Cornish's account in 1852, which Mr. Plaisted in 1874 pronounces a falsity, *in toto*.

I have no more doubt to-day than I ever had, that these two fowls were chickens out of *my* yards in 1850 or 1851, or that they were hatched by New York or Connecticut parties out of eggs sent there from my original Light-Gray Shanghae fowls, than I have that I am living now to write this paragraph. Nobody knows and never did know any thing to the contrary, as to *this* strain of stock, except that "a sailor *reported* to Mr. Chamberlin" (who sent him to New York after big fowls), that "he *found* a pair of light gray ones, which he purchased" of a man in New York, whose name Mr. Chamberlin never got, and "who gave no account of their origin, except that they had been brought there by some sailors," &c., which statement is not a little mixed and doubtful, upon its face, to say the least of it.

No time is fixed upon as to *when* these birds were thus "reported" to have been "found by a sailor," in Mr. Chamberlin's employ. Now, what became of *Chamberlin's* stock? Mr. Cornish says, "I procured my stock *from* the original pair," &c. Mr. Chamberlin called them "*Chittagongs*." Mr. Cornish sold his fowls (or some of them) to Mr. Hatch, who exhibited them as "Gray Chittagongs." *Why?* Because, when they were placed in the show-room in Boston, alongside of my original Grays (then in G. W. George's hands), they so closely resembled the Chittagongs (as Mr. Cornish says), that Hatch considered this their proper name. Nobody then saw any difference between these fowls, and mine, and George's, and Dr. Bennett's. But each of us had different titles for our birds, which the Committee of Judges

complained of, as I have shown; and Dr. Bennett was himself one of that Committee, who then contended so ardently for the "Brahmapootra" title, but who was for the time being voted down in committee, three to one.

Mr. Plaisted (Dr. Bennett's former partner), writing of the Brahmas in 1874, says that "Mr. Hatch entered his Chamberlin fowls at Boston as 'Chittagongs.' Dr. Bennett then announced these as 'Brahmapootras.' He bought of and paid Hatch for his lot, and placed the prize cards on the coops, with the *new* name and the names of the owners, among which was Dr. Bennett's. This transaction displeased Mr. Hatch exceedingly; and this was his first and last connection with the New-England Society." Mr. Hatch preferred the name "Chittagong" to Bennett's proposed new title, and left the show-room in high dudgeon, because the Doctor had thus nicknamed what *he* called his "*Chittagongs.*"

"Mr. Hatch had more of this stock at home," continues Mr. Plaisted, "which by spring he was able to sell at round prices. He bred them in 1852 and 1853, and his experience with them ended about that time. He bred those with pea-combs, and he considered them preferable to the single-combed for this frosty climate," — which last-mentioned fact proves again that there were a good many "*single* combs" around in those days, among the "*pure* pea-comb Cornish-Chamberlin-Hatch-Bennett-Plaisted 'Brahmapootras.'"

How long Mr. Chamberlin bred the old pair of Grays, which are thus "reported" to have been purchased by a sailor, from no one knows *who,* no one knows *where,* and about which no one pretends to give any clue as to their *origin,* I am uninformed.* The first of the "Brahmapootra stock" I remember ever to have seen, or heard of, was that which I have now described as having been put into the Boston show in 1852, and I *think,* also, the few young birds from Bennett in 1851; though I can find no reference made to any other entry or contribution in that year. My impression is that there were a few shown by Mr. Hatch in 1851, or some one from Connecticut, — young fowls, — though I am not certain about this.

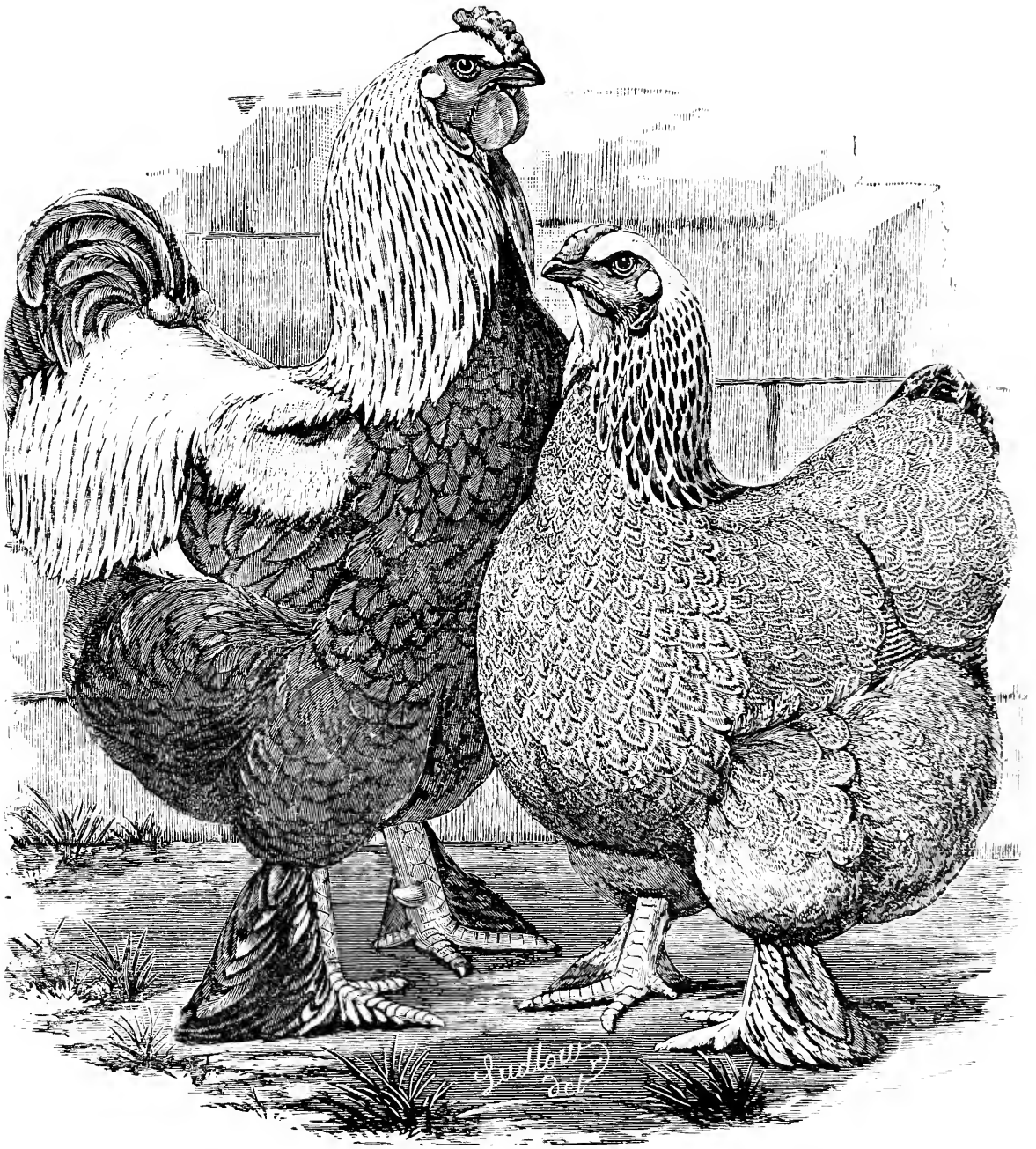
After the exhibition of 1852, however, the mania for the Gray fowls became rife, and everybody began to look about for good specimens of the Gray Shanghaes or "Brahmapootras." This name was soon changed, because it proved too

* In July, 1874, Mr. Plaisted says, "the old pair were killed in 1851." I am tempted to query *why?* And to further ask why these *old* fowls were never publicly shown? — G. P. B.

cumbrous; and by the next year it had settled down partially towards *Brahmah*, and every one who had any of this stock — from my birds, from Bennett's, from George's, or from Hatch's, made the most of their opportunity; while breeders generally, both in England and America, agreed upon this last cognomen (dropping the terminal h), as the accepted name for this fowl. I have never changed my opinion that it is a misnomer, however, though in its brevity, now, it is a good title.

The fowl itself is of *Chinese* origin. None of the American original stock (of *any* nominal strain) ever saw India, the Brahmapootra River, Luckipoor, or the Bay of Bengal. Nobody in that region of country has ever seen or reported this fowl as being known *there*. Notwithstanding the past five and twenty years of excitement in America and Europe about these fowls, when it has been freely known to sailors and shipmasters constantly coming from and going to India, how valuable would be any *fresh* importation of such stock, never but *this once* can it be said that "these Gray fowls came from *India*." No duplicate shipments have ever been made from "Luckipoor up the Brahmapootra." No such fowls have ever since been heard of, seen, "found," "reported," bought, or possessed, by *any*body, any*where*, in England or America, except this very stock (and its progeny) that I have now described; and all of which, I solemnly believe, came from the pair of Philadelphia Gray birds (1849) and the five Light Gray fowls I purchased in New York, on board ship from Shanghae, through Wm. T. Porter, Esq., in 1850; and no *honest* "evidence" to the contrary exists.

No Gray Shanghaes, no Gray Chittagongs, no Light Gray Brahmas, no such *Gray* fowls of any description, have come to America or into Great Britain, from either Shanghae or India, in the past nearly twenty-five years! *All* the fowls we have had, therefore, have been bred from these two original importations — *my* stock — as I have clearly demonstrated, at least to my own satisfaction. When anybody can show me any evidence that I am in error regarding either of the strains I have alluded to, which are *all* the original Light Grays (or Brahmas) that anybody has ever mentioned, to my knowledge, I shall be very glad to be corrected. Until we have something clearer and more definite upon this subject than we ever have had thus far, the *facts*, as I have now stated them, must therefore stand; and *my* stock is fully entitled to the claim I have set up for its originality, in this country and Great Britain, whether that stock be good or bad.



DARK BRAHMA COCK AND HEN. (Prize Fowls. From Life.)

Bred and owned by W. H. Todd, Vermillion, Ohio.

In the face of these facts, nevertheless, almost a score of years afterwards, a Mr. Weld "fires off" at Virgil Cornish of Connecticut "a whole string of interrogatories," says Wright, to prove that this "one pair of large gray fowls" (which this man in Connecticut had *first* announced he received there in 1849) "came into New York in a ship from Luckipoor in India, in September, 1846!" For some reason best known to himself, this Mr. M. C. Weld thus thrust himself into temporary notoriety, and fancied that he could acquire favor with the Englishman, if he could contrive to drag out of Cornish some sort of testimony confirmatory of his (Wright's) silly theory; but found, alas! that *he* had simply been "hoisted by his own petard." For Cornish had unluckily forgotten his 1849 story, and fatally named the year 1846 as the time when he got his wonderful "Brahma Pootras;" which he *then* (in 1869) states were so *named* in 1850! What name did he call these birds by from 1846 to 1850? Can Cornish or Weld or Wright inform us upon this trivial point? And can either of this hopeful trio, who are so "accurate" and "explicit" and "unanswerable" in their statements and conclusions, tell us where these remarkable birds were secreted, from 1846 or 1847 up to 1850 and 1851, that nobody knew of, or had ever seen them? "We pause for a reply," but fear we shall hardly live long enough to get one from these "clearly accurate" and truth-loving gentlemen!

Upon this plainly doubtful story, when it was given to the public, the accomplished editor of the *London Field* commented very sharply, and showed how manifestly improbable was this adroitly-concocted narrative. So far as Mr. Cornish's tale was concerned, this writer said:—

"A sailor, whose name nobody knows, belonging to a ship whose name no one remembers, and having a captain also unknown, is *stated* to have 'sailed from the *port* of Luckipoor' with these original fowls. It is a pity Mr. Cornish did not also forget the name of this port; for geographical truth compels us to state that Luckipoor is *not* a port at all! but a small inland town in the Himalaya Mountains, one hundred miles distant from the *nearest* point of the Brahmapootra River. Luckipoor is *not* among the ports mentioned in the 'Sailing Directions of British India;' and, as far as we can learn from naturalists, and others acquainted with that part of the world, *no such race of birds is to be found there.*"

This emphatic clincher, from such authority as W. B. Tegetmeier, F.Z.S., is acknowledged all over the world to be, might be accepted ordinarily as a *finality.* Mr. Wright shrewdly "dismisses this subject of Luckipoor," very

summarily, after reading the above from the *Field* (see Wright's latest work, p. 243), "with the simple remark that it is scarcely matter for wonder that the name of the ship, captain, and sailor should be forgotten," &c. But I will add here, that, inasmuch as *no such ship ever arrived at New York*, either in 1849 *first*, or in 1846 *afterwards* (as the two Cornish letters "accurately state"), *this* fact will better account for all this "forgetting," or "never knowing the names of either sailor,* ship, captain, or original owner" of these "large light-gray fowls, so *reported* to have been found" somewhere (?) for Mr. Chamberlin.

After Mr. Cornish's two different statements were published, and fulsomely indorsed by Wright as being "unanswerably accurate" regarding the true origin of this so-called Chamberlin pair of Light Brahmas, I visited New York for the purpose of learning something about this fabulous "India ship," thus said to have arrived there *twice*, so mysteriously, with these lauded birds on board, from Luckipoor.

I obtained access to the old Customs' Registers there, from a critical examination of which, though I previously knew all about this Bennett "Brahmapootra" swindle, I ascertained the following two important facts, viz., that there is *not* upon the records of the foreign inward arrival lists there, any mention made of *any* ship or vessel from "the port of Luckipoor, in India," in *any* month of the year 1849, *first;* nor is any such arrival at New York recorded "in September" (or in any other month) "of the year 1846," *after*.

This finishes the sailor-Cornish story; which, no doubt, Mr. Cornish and Mr. Chamberlin *believed* when it was first told. But, as Mr. Tegetmeier truthfully asserted, "there isn't a particle of evidence in this to show that these fowls ever came from *India*." Dr. Bennett, one of Wright's claimed chief witnesses, purchased of *me*, for $50, the first pair of Grays I ever bred; from which *he* bred the first so-called "Brahmapootra" chickens he ever exhibited (*vide* official report of judges at exhibition) in Boston, Mass. And the Cornish (Hatch) fowls then shown were there called "Chittagongs," as see Cornish's two letters, and the report.

When, in 1853, the Dark Brahmas were also first sent out from my yards in Melrose, Mr. Tegetmeier in his "Poultry Book" justly observes, "Suddenly a new variety sprang upon the scene. These were the *Dark* Brahmas,

* In the fall of 1874, a Connecticut writer says this sailor "still lives!"

which Mr. Burnham of the United States sent to Mr. John Baily of London, which were exhibited at the Birmingham show (1853), among the extra stock; and one pair of which were purchased of him by Mr. Taylor of Shepard's Bush, for 100 guineas" ($500)!

Now, these Dark Brahma fowls were very choice birds. And I sent this trio out to Mr. Baily, in response to his express order that "they must be finer than any thing I had yet sent to England, if it were possible." They were good ones, very large, in splendid condition, finely pencilled, and carried off the first prize at the Birmingham show of 1853, alongside of the splendid *Light* Grays I had the previous year sent to the Queen. But *all* these fowls were bred *from the same stock* precisely, at first. The Dark and the Light varieties both came out of the Philadelphia Grays *and* the lighter colored Gray birds I subsequently obtained from Shanghae through Mr. Porter, at New York. And just as soon as it was discovered that the *Dark* Brahmas were to become popular, and the fact was published that the first Dark Brahmas sent to England had come out from Mr. Burnham of Melrose, who had sent the first Light ones there, Mr. Cornish of Connecticut (or some one for him) published in a New-York paper the fact that "he noticed, in course of time, as he bred his Brahmas, that *they grew darker in color.*" But neither he nor they had any *Dark* Brahmas to offer from the pretended pair "*reported* by a sailor" to have been "found in New York," the "origin of which nobody knew any thing about, except that the first pair had been brought in the India ships, from up the Brahmapootra River, which empties into the Bay of Bengal," &c.; — which account might have answered a purpose, had it been made public at any time prior to March 2, 1852, three years after *I* had been breeding my fine Gray fowls and sending their chickens and eggs all over this country and England.

Whether my account thus gives the true *origin* of the Brahmas or not, is not very material at this late day. I have now written it, however, and furnished *data* to back it; and I have given the statement made by Mr. Cornish, in his early letter, regarding the Chamberlin-Hatch fowls. I have no doubt that Mr. Cornish — who is a very respectable and veracious gentleman — *believed* what Mr. Chamberlin told him "the sailor reported" to Mr. Chamberlin, as having come "from the New York man, who knew nothing of the origin of the light Gray fowls" thus "found" there. And Mr. Chamberlin, also, might have believed what this sailor said. The sailor

probably believed what the man in New York (if there were any such man) said,— to wit, that he "knew nothing of their origin," &c. And, though these New-York parties are described by Mr. Cornish as being "all very obscure men," it *may* be that "the man in New York, whose name he has not got," believed the story he repeated to the sailor, about what the other sailors told *him* regarding these fowls coming there "in the India ships," &c. But I *don't*. That is all the difference there is, or ever has been, between the *theory* of Mr. Cornish and Wright, and the *facts* that I have herein related.

But this tale was utterly without foundation as to the Cornish-Chamberlin gray fowls having "come from *India*," as this sailor is said to have announced; for no such arrival of the ship thus reported came into New York from India, either in 1849, 1846, *or* 1847! *No* light "Gray Shanghae" and *no* "Brahmapoutra" fowls *ever* came "from *India*" to Cornish, Chamberlin, Burnham, or any other man in America. The name "Brahmapoutra" was concocted by Dr. Bennett, against *my* protest, and has been since adopted by us all. The "Gray Shanghaes," or (now) "Brahmas," never saw India; but I chanced to possess the *first* of this race that were thus developed.

It is altogether too much mixed, — this theory. And, what *I* further believe, and always have believed, about this very "pair of light Gray fowls" which Mr. Chamberlin so got, through his "sailor" agent, who "*reported* that he found them in New York," is, that they went there from *my* stock; and that "the man in New York" sold them to him "at a great expense," perhaps knowing whence they came (and perhaps not), but making the most he could in this bargain, because they were "a very fine pair of large ones."

What confirms me the more in this belief, is the notorious fact that none of this splendid stock was seen anywhere until *after* I had bred my Grays in Roxbury two seasons; and not until Dr. Bennett produced his fowls at the shows of 1851 and 1852. *Then* we had young samples of this so-called Cornish-Chamberlin-Hatch stock; but no *old* Gray fowls were even then shown, except *mine* — a fact that cannot be disputed.

Now, *if* this stock could have been shown to have existed in America *prior* to my introduction of the Grays to notice in 1849, '50, as the record exhibits in *my* case, — why not then have let us know where it was, who bred it, what it was called, and whence it had come? What need existed for all this secrecy and ignorance and ambiguity about a single pair of fowls? It is too late to go back *now*, and say in one sentence (as some one asserted in 1873) that the

"Light Brahmas came to this country from India in 1846," and undertake to explain this nonsense by stating that the said fowls were the Cornish-Chamberlin stock; because nobody has ever yet claimed that any of *that* strain of "Light Brahmas" were seen until 1851 and 1852, and *these* were only chickens, or one-year-old birds. *If* "they were brought here in 1846," where *were* they, pray, from 1846 to 1850, '51, four or five years? when every competing fancier and poultry-raiser in New England — such active men as Burnham, Bennett, Capt. Williams, Marsh, Dr. Wight, Balch, Devereux, Ad. White, Buckminster, Jaques, Sampson, and a hundred others — were constantly on the *qui vive*, in search of large fowls and novelties in poultry; and who travelled the country in every direction, continually looking out for something new, which they could turn to profit, in this line, "without regard to expense"?

Is it at all probable, if such birds were then in this country, that some of us busy searchers for "marvellous chickens" would not have found them, or have known the fact of their existence, for five long years, in the midst of the mania then current for the biggest and most extraordinary fowls to be had? Or is it at all likely, if *any* man had such fowls in 1846, that he wouldn't have let somebody know it in 1847, 1848, and 1849, when the rage was well known to have existed everywhere in England and America for Shanghaes and Cochins and Chittagongs, and prices for good specimens, their progeny, or their eggs, were approaching the fabulous?

If the fowls reported to have been brought to New York "by some sailors in the India ships" were the ones that were said in 1873 to have "arrived here in 1846," will *some* one kindly prove to us where those "three pairs of imported fowls, of enormous size" were secreted — among them this "one pair of Light Gray ones," and their progeny — from 1846 to 1851, '52? What became of the *old* pair? why were they never exhibited? where did *they* live? where did they die? and who owned them at last? Can anybody answer these queries? I think *not!* And I am also quite positive that, whatever may be the facts as to the origin of the Cornish fowls, *no* "Light Brahmas came to this country in 1846," to anybody. And it is quite as certain, to *my* view, that no Brahmas ever "came from India," at *any* time, to America. Most certain is it that, since the *début* of *my* Light and Dark Brahmas in the United States and England, no "Brahmas" of any kind have again been imported from anywhere in the East, into Great Britain or America.

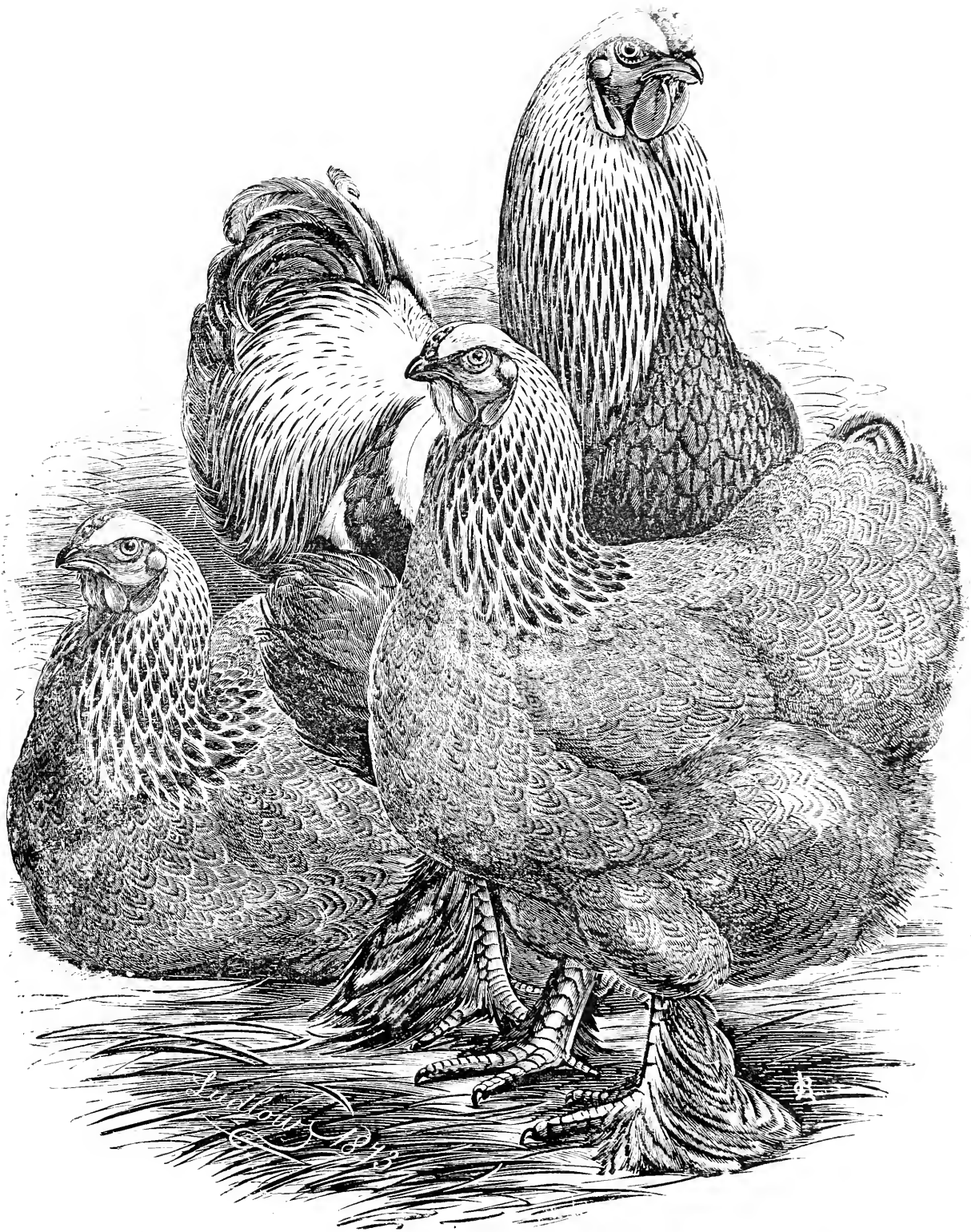
It would be erroneous to assume that the *modern* Dark Brahmas, such as

have in late years been received in this country from England, from leading breeders there, are not sometimes improved birds in their general make-up. This is frankly conceded, especially when we occasionally meet with importations from that country believed to be any thing near the mark set forth in the two admirable delineations in this volume, to be found on pages 93 and 101. But these representations, though very attractive to look at, are of course very partial, or are largely "fancy pictures." We have bred and seen and handled a great many hundreds of superior Brahmas in our time; but we have yet to see the living specimens of this race that ever equalled these "portraits," as they are designated by the English breeders of them; and we greatly doubt if such perfect specimens are raised there, often!

Still these pictures are said to be life-likenesses of representative birds belonging to different English fanciers, that have taken first prizes at several of the leading Exhibitions in Great Britain in 1873 and 1874. The nearest approach to these *hens* that we have ever had in America were two of the five extraordinary Dark Brahmas shown for the Churchman prize at Buffalo in January, 1874. The specimen that *won*, in that show, marked 97 points, according to the old standard, and is a very extra sample, of superb symmetry and color. In 1873 we bred, among a considerable number of Dark pullets, two only of the pure clear steel-gray, that at eighteen months old proved splendid hens. But they do not equal the pictures given of the English prize birds; and we never expect to meet with the *reality* which these fine drawings represent. Both these pictures show us very perfect samples, however, and these are a very good *pattern* for ambitious fanciers to aim to equal in form, feathering, marking, carriage, and general contour.

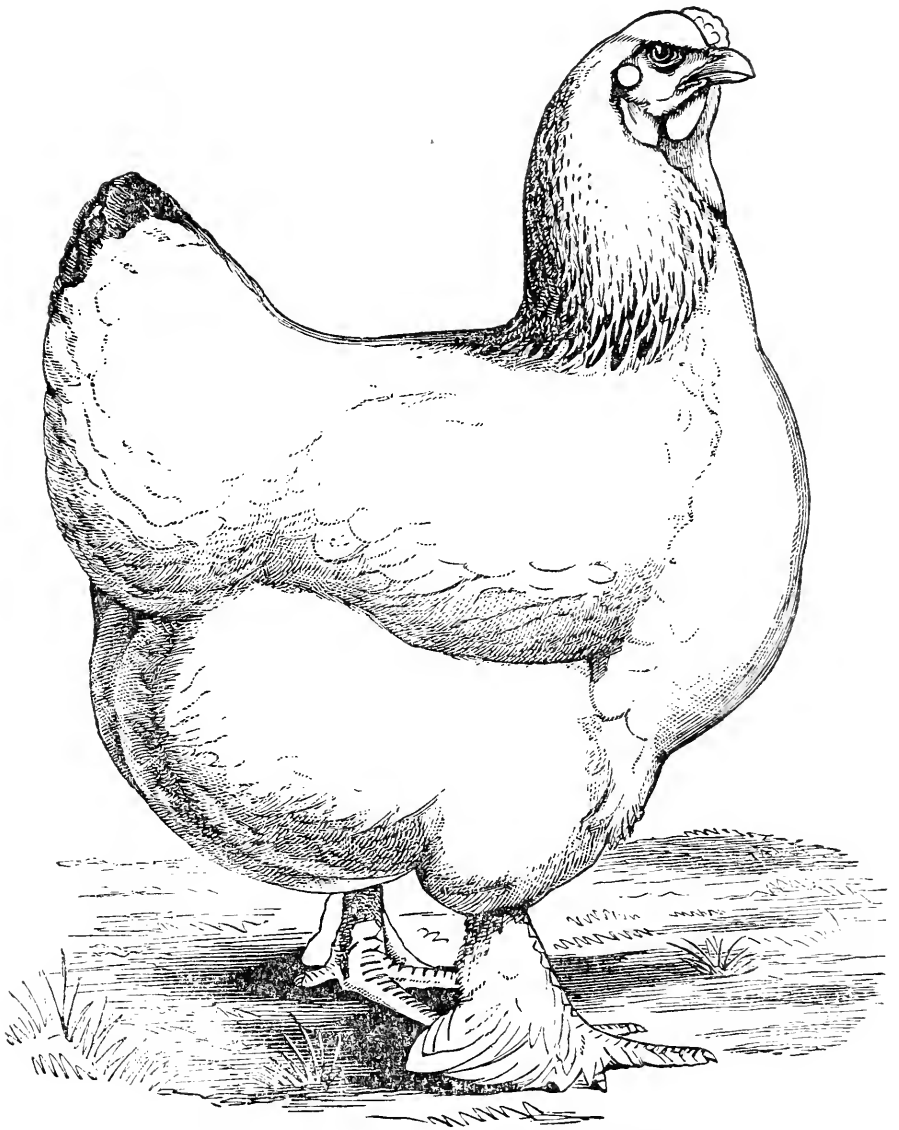
It is very well to place such charming specimens publicly before the readers of the poultry-books, because they are certainly very pleasant to contemplate; and it *may* be that some of our enterprising American amateurs or fanciers will be tempted to strive to breed quite up to such models. It *may* be that it has been done in England. But we doubt if any such birds were ever produced, through former or modern efforts. At the same time, we commend these to the notice of the reader, as rare models indeed; and trust that some Yankee breeder may succeed in producing their equals, sooner or later. Of one thing we feel pretty certain: none of us will ever contrive to excel them.

In the *Light* variety, we can equal the English, and "give them odds," yet. No samples, to *our* eye, have ever been bred abroad, of this color, such as a



TRIO OF DARK BRAHMAS. Imported by S. H. Seamans, Esq., Wauwatosa, Wis.

Choice specimens of this variety are bred also by Wills & Peter, Bloomington, Ill; C. G. Sanford, Providence, R.I.; E. J. Taylor, Waterloo, N.Y.; W. S. Randall, Mich., etc.



MODEL OF AN AMERICAN LIGHT BRAHMA HEN, TWO YEARS OLD.

dozen leading American fanciers have in their yards to-day, by scores; while, at the public exhibitions of the past three or four years in the Eastern States, as well as at Philadelphia, Penn., and at Buffalo, N.Y., individual cocks and hens of the Light Brahmas have been shown that have never been equalled in Great Britain, and will be hard to beat in this country, in the

future. And we now refer especially to the prize Light Brahmas at the Boston show in February, 1874, the contributions of Messrs. Sturtevant of Framingham, and Mr. Buzzell of Clinton, Mass., and also to the Plaisted and Carpenter fowls, as now being bred in Hartford, Conn.

It is not my design in these pages to *argue* the question of origin. I have stated and will state only patent facts regarding the nativity of my own stock, and shall quote such accounts as I can find, or am familiar with, in reference to the stock of other importers. If what I record in this book is inaccurate, the error will be unintentional; and I shall aim to be very careful in my statements.

Yet, so far as I am informed at this time, I have herein set down the exact truth, accompanied with veritable vouchers regarding the origin of my Gray Shanghae, or now so-called "Brahma" stock; and I believe that the opinion I have expressed and have always entertained in reference to what has been claimed as another strain, is entirely in accordance with reason and verity. And the more I see of this splendid stock of both colors, as it is now bred from year to year in England or the United States, the more firmly am I convinced that it originated *alone* with the birds first in my possession; of which, as to their quality, color, proportions, and leading characteristics, I give the annexed authentic descriptions from 1849 forward, taken from the published authorities, — which I quote below, with dates, and names of the several authors who have hitherto described my fowls; as may be learned by reference to the original statements, copies of which I here append: —

"This is a very superior bird, showy in plumage; and the color of mine (the Philadelphia first pair) is gray, generally, with lightish yellow and white feathers on pullets; the cock gray body, tinted with stray light and white; the tail and *breast* being nearly *black.*" —*G. P. Burnham's description*, in *Dr. Bennett's Poultry Book, of his original pair received from Dr. Kerr* in 1849.

"This fowl, so remarkable for size and beauty, is placed *first* among domestic varieties, as the true *gallus giganteus*. The specimens (cock and hen) from which the portraits here presented were taken are in possession of George P. Burnham, Esq., of Roxbury, Mass., and were obtained by him from Dr. J. J. Kerr (Asa Rugg), near Philadelphia, Penn." — *Dr. J. C. Bennett's Poultry Book,*" p. 27, *published in March*, 1850.

"The mature fowls presented to the Queen of Great Britain left me in December, 1852. The 'London Illustrated News' of Jan. 22, 1853, says,

'A very choice consignment of domestic fowls from G. P. Burnham, Esq., was brought to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, by last steamer from the United States. They are denominated "Gray Shanghaes" (in contradistinction to the Red or Yellow Shanghaes). They are of mammoth proportions and exquisite plumage, light silvery bodies, approaching white, delicately traced and pencilled with black upon neck-hackles, and tips of wings and tail. The whole of these birds are almost precisely alike, in form, plumage, and general characteristics.' . . . 'The color is creamy white, slightly splashed with pale straw-color, tail black, and hackles pencilled with black.'" — *Burnham's History of the Hen Fever*, pp. 102, 103, *in* 1855. Extracted from *London News* of February, 1853.

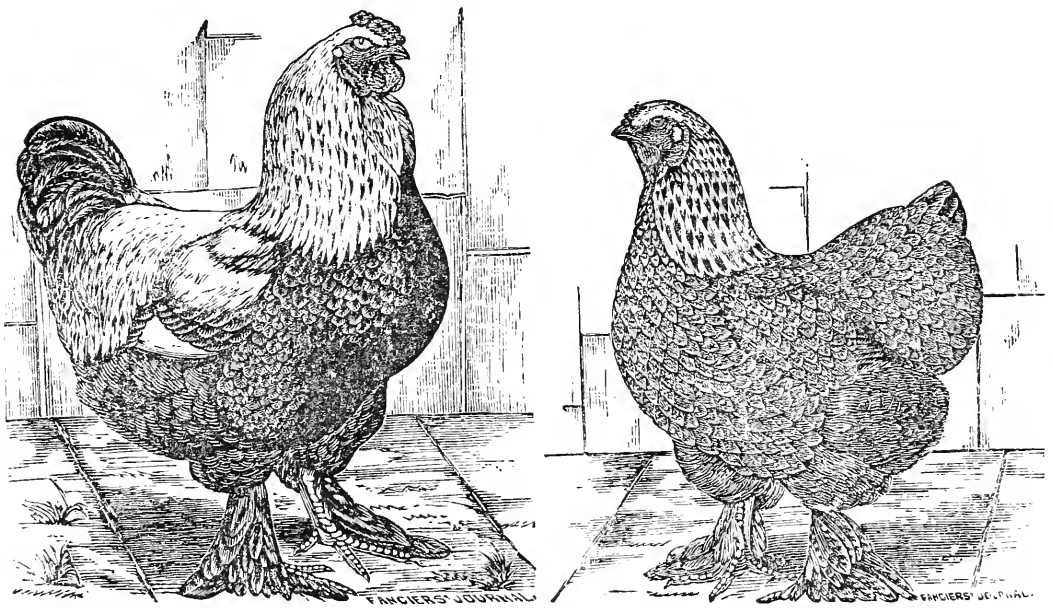
"Among the first Light Brahmas ever seen in England were those sent here by Mr. G. P. Burnham," says Mr. Tegetmeier in 1867; and, in the same work on poultry, Dr. Wm. Custe Gwynne says, "What confirms me in my view as to the identity of these '*Brahmapootras*' (so called by Dr. Bennett, who sent Dr. Gwynne his fowls) with these *Shanghaes*, is the fact that the fowls previously presented to Her Majesty by Mr. Burnham, under the name of 'Gray Shanghaes,' *are admitted by Dr. Bennett* (the author of the *name* 'Brahmapootra') *to be precisely similar to his own.*" — *Rev. W. Wingfield's London Illustrated Poultry Book*, p. 177, 1853.

"There is not a particle of evidence to show that these fowls were 'imported from *India*.' From all we can learn from naturalists and others who have visited that part of the world, no such race of birds have ever been seen or known there. In fact, they did *not* originate in India, but in America." — *London Illustrated Poultry Book, by Tegetmeier*, 1867.

"The Light Brahmas are undoubtedly *identical* with those *Gray* birds that in the first importation came from *Shanghae;* and public attention was first called to them by an acute fancier, Mr. Geo. P. Burnham, presenting a consignment of them to Her Majesty the Queen, in 1852." . . . "*These* birds were subsequently exhibited by His Royal Highness the late Prince Albert, at the London and Birmingham shows, as 'Brahmapootras.' These *Light* Brahmas, with pure white or cream-colored bodies, and elegantly pencilled hackles, were in great favor, and were universally admired for their beauty, &c., when suddenly *a new* variety sprang upon the scene. A pair of birds were shown at Birmingham (in 1853), which were sold for 100 guineas. These were *dark* colored, and different from the others. *They were the first* 'DARK BRAHMAS' ever seen in this country. They were sent from Mr. G. P. Burnham of the United States, to Mr. John Baily of London, in 1853; and Mr. Taylor of Shepard's Bush was the purchaser of this pair at the Birmingham Exhibition," at the figure above mentioned. — *Tegetmeier's Poultry Book* (Illustrated) in 1867.

"We have found, in our own yards, that *we* could soon breed *black* Brahmas (?) if such were desired; or that in three seasons, by choosing the *lightest*, we could produce almost clear *white* ones; and, as the original birds were somewhat *darker* than the 'Light Brahmas' *now* shown, either color (Dark *or* Light) *could have been bred* from them with still greater rapidity and ease." — *Lewis Wright, Illustrated Poultry Book*, in 1870, p. 246.

Both the Light and the Dark "Brahmas," as they are bred in England and America to-day, are strong types of the true Gray *Shanghae* race. For



DARK BRAHMAS, BRED BY J. M. WADE, PHILADELPHIA, PA., 1873.

five-and-twenty years they have continued on in their unrivalled beauty of form, plumage, great size, and admirable qualities for usefulness among poultry; and no one who breeds these varieties as they should be bred — uncontaminated, amongst themselves — can fail to be delighted with the results.

Mr. Plaisted says, in his recently-published history, that "the birds Mr. Burnham sent to England he knows nothing about;" but that the birds *he* and *Dr. Bennett* sent out there bred Buff chickens, and he "was more afraid of this stock" (which he claims is the Cornish-Chamberlin strain, *pure)* "throwing *buff* chickens," sometimes, "after he sent his fowls to England, than of any thing else."

This might have been so with Mr. Plaisted's birds; and we all know that Dr. Bennett's stock at the outset had the buff or light drab silver-cinnamon cross in it. But *I* never knew of the first instance, until Wright falsely thrust my name into a misquoted paragraph on this point in his "Book of Poultry," where chickens from *my* fowls came of "a buff color." And I do not believe it ever occurred.

At all events, I can solemnly aver that I have bred thousands upon thousands of my own stock, and I know of other thousands that have been bred, in both countries, that never failed in the last quarter of a century to breed *only* pure Light and Dark *Gray* fowls. They are naturally a parti-colored bird, black and white; and the range of color in chickens, for years, was uneven, coming lighter or darker at times, — from which, in subsequent mating, either for breeding or for selling, it was found advisable to match the birds nearest of a color together. But never a Buff chicken have I met with, yet, in my Gray progeny. And I have yet to learn authentically of any one who has bred them pure, as *I* tried to breed them — by themselves — who has ever encountered this variation in the true Burnham stock.

And here I reprint an article from a correspondent of "The New York Bulletin," Mr. Walker Waite (now of Brooklyn, formerly of Mass.), an early patron of mine, who thus tells *his* experience with my Gray Shanghae stock, in 1874. He says, —

"A recent writer (Mr. C. C. Plaisted) in a poultry monthly commences a history of the early days of the Brahmapootra fowl, and tells us some *new* things about the long-contested question as to where the first ones came from. I don't think it is much of an object to know this; but, whatever is the true account, *this* writer has stated several glaring mistakes in his first article on this subject. His dates are wrong and mixed; or else Mr. Cornish's and Chamberlin's and the 'old salt's' account, and Wright, Tegetmeier, Burnham, Bennett, and twenty others, are wrong. *His* original fowls, — that is, the first Chamberlin pair, — Mr. Cornish says, 'came into Connecticut from New York early in 1849, and he got his stock *of* Chamberlin, next season.' Was there *another* pair of large Light Gray fowls got by this same Mr. Chamberlin, through *another* sailor, two years *before* this? — or, as this new writer says, 'by a Mr. Knox, in 1847, *for* Mr. Chamberlin.'

"I never before heard of this, if it is so. But I think it must refer to 1849, when Cornish first tells his story (in his letter, March 2, 1852). At all events, one other point in this article is new, and that is that this Gray stock produced *Buff* fowls. This writer says indirectly, at random, that 'the early

Brahmas sent to England by himself, Dr. Bennett, Hatch, &c., which Mr. Lewis Wright has described as "Dr. Bennett's *pure* Brahmas," in breeding showed many different colors; the most objectionable being pure *buff*, as fine as we see to-day among the Buff Cochins.'

"I have bred the Light and Dark Gray birds several years. I had my first ones from Mr. Burnham, and from eggs I bought of him, direct; and I have had the Cornish stock since. I bred them in 1852, '53, '54, and after that in 1859, '60. But I never yet saw a Buff chicken out of *either* of these Gray strains; and, if there was any one thing the Burnham "Gray Shanghae" stock did, it was that they bred true to *color*, as long as I had them. I have no doubt *all* this stock comes from one parentage, and that it is all *Chinese*, and not *East India* poultry. Mr. Burnham unquestionably gave us the first specimens, — whether they were good or poor; and the others probably came out of the same stock *his* did, in some way."

In furtherance of my opinion, I affirm that at the very last annual exhibitions of poultry in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York State, the first premium "Brahma" fowls, both Dark and Light, were the exact counterparts in color, form, and markings of the best specimens I showed in Boston, and sent out to England to Her Majesty the Queen, to Mr. John Baily of London, and others, in 1851, '52, and '53.

In September, 1870, Mr. John Baily wrote me on the subject of Brahmas these words: "I *continue* to breed from the progeny the old type of 'Brahmas' which you sent me sixteen years ago, as you may have observed from the fine birds I have sent hence to Mr. Philander Williams and others in the United States." These choice Brahmas, which Mr. Baily has thus *returned* to the United States (bred out of my original stock), have taken prizes *repeatedly*, as their parents did before them, at the principal exhibitions in America, in the last half-a-dozen years, — Mr. Philander Williams's splendid samples frequently bearing off the palm among the best, as everybody in this country is aware. A Worcester (Mass.) correspondent of "The Fancier's Journal" thus puts it, in July 1874. He says,

"The real *facts* are: Dr. Bennett bought of Mr. Burnham the very old gray pair that Dr. Kerr sent to Burnham from Philadelphia in 1849. Dr. Bennett bred them, and in 1851 or 1852 exhibited *chickens* from them, which were the first Brahmas, or then called 'Burrampooters' (see Report of show) ever shown. If this name *was* established in 1850 (as Mr. Wright makes Cornish say in 1869, though in 1852 Mr. Cornish himself *then* calls them 'Chittagongs,' in his *original* letter), why did not Dr. Bennett, in his

Poultry Book in 1850, '51, illustrate and describe these fowls of Cornish's? Dr. Bennett does not *mention* the word Cornish, 'Burrampooter,' 'Brahmapootra,' or 'Brahma,' in his entire book. Why not?

"Mr. Wright says he 'was an enthusiastic admirer of Brahmas,' and 'got his stock of Cornish.' Cornish says this '*name* was established in 1850.' How *can* this be 'correct history?' If these fine fowls had been known as Brahmas in 1850, when Bennett (who loved them so dearly, according to Wright) wrote and published his descriptions of *Burnham's* stock and others, would not Dr. Bennett have been likely to know something of the existence of Mr. Cornish or his fowls? I think this is clear; and I have never yet seen this important point brought forward. It certainly cannot be true that this 'Brahma' name was established in 1850. Probably Mr. Cornish meant 1852, or later — for he says himself, in his *first* published letter, March 2, 1852, that they were called 'Chittagong.' At that time Mr. Burnham had been breeding the Light Gray birds, which he always called 'Gray Shanghaes,' I believe, for several years, according to Dr. Bennett's authority.

"Mr. Wright is very clearly at fault in *this* respect; and his statement in his 'Brahma Fowl,' that 'the first pair of Cornish fowls ever bred *came into Connecticut in* 1849,' contradicts his own witness, Cornish, also, who says, in 1869, that *the fowls came in* 1846. Mr. Wright's theory about this question seems to be the worst thing he ever tried to prove, with the conflicting testimony he has thus far produced; while I think no poultry man in America, at least, ever put any faith in the stupid 'sailor's story.' And the statement of 'F. R. W.' that Mr. Wright is acknowledged to be the best living authority on this breed of fowls, is simply ridiculous. How *could* he, three thousand miles away, know any thing on this subject of *origin*, except what he reads or hears about from *this* side of the water?"

Mr. Mark Pitman of Salem, Mass., an old, cautious, experienced breeder of Chinese fowls, who knows as much about the origin of the "Brahmas" as does any American fancier, has within a few years publicly stated that "the Light and Dark Brahmas, as originally bred, have both nearly the same origin;" and that "they were not imported, but were bred first in this country." Mr. Pitman adds, that "Mr. G. P. Burnham, who surprised not only the royal family of Queen Victoria, but all the breeders of fowls in England (in 1852), by his present of an elegant lot of mature Light Brahmas, then sent to Her Majesty the Queen, saw in the *Dark* variety still greater remuneration, and disposed of them at what might even now be termed fabulous prices. *This* variety at once took the lead of all others (for a time); and from this stock many of the large breeders of England and Ireland were supplied subsequently." And, from the progeny of these birds,

which I sent to Great Britain, as in the instance of Mr. Baily of Mount Street, London (one of the leading dealers in England), have come back to the United States from Ireland and England during the years 1865 and 1866 down to 1873, '74, scores of trios of choice Dark Brahma birds, again the counterparts, with but slight variation, of the superior samples I first sent out to Mr. Baily in 1853.

In further confirmation of this position as to priority of date in the introduction of the *Dark* Brahmas to public notice, I quote from the columns of "The New-York Poultry Bulletin," in the month of June, 1874, this sentence, from the advertisement of Mr. John Baily & Son of *London*, still running in that magazine: "Now ready for immediate shipment, — *Brahmas*, Light and Dark; the former from English cocks and Philander Williams's pullets; the latter direct descent from G. P. Burnham's original consignment to us" (in 1853).

The theory of the advocates of the Cornish-Chamberlin-Bennett-Hatch-Brahmapoötra origin is, first, that Chamberlin (*vide* Cornish in 1852) "brought his fowls into Connecticut in the early part of 1849." In 1869, this same Mr. Cornish appears to have been drawn out in a second letter, by a Mr. Weld (whom nobody previously had heard of), to aver that "the Chamberlin fowls came from Luckipoor in India, up the Brahmapootra River, into New York in September, 1846." This goes back of his *first* plain assertion, according to Lewis Wright, three years. The reasons for this second story I will explain in the closing chapter to this volume.

In 1874, Mr. Plaisted of Connecticut, who claims to be "the oldest breeder of Light Brahmas in America" (and who was formerly a partner, in 1853, of Dr. Bennett, the author of the "Brahmapootra" *name*), writes as follows, in an article furnished to "The Hartford Poultry World," page 124, in June: —

"The first pair of these fowls, about which there has been so much discussion, and so much written, were brought by one Charles Knox to Mr. Nelson H. Chamberlin, a resident of Hartford, Conn., in 1847. They were first bred by Mr. Chamberlin in 1848. . . . Mr. Chamberlin paid for his first pair of these fowls the sum of five dollars, — considered at that time a fabulous price. . . . Charles Knox was at that time clerk on a propeller running between Hartford and New York, and was cousin to Mr. Chamberlin's wife. Having been requested by Mr. Chamberlin to purchase a nice pair of fowls in New York, — something *new*, — Mr. Knox soon reported seeing *two* pairs

(not three pairs, as Cornish stated in his 1852 letter), one red, the other gray, *just arrived on an East-India vessel,* and that he had the refusal of a pair until the next trip. The result was the selection of the *Grays* at a venture, and their removal to Hartford. Mr. Chamberlin related these facts to me, himself."

The final conclusions of Lewis Wright's labored *argument,* put forth to prove what never existed, and which never had the slightest foundation in fact, are thus expressed by this English "authority," in the last paragraph of his "*Brahma Fowl, a Monograph:*" —

"It will be observed that the original *importation* being now determined so early as 1846," . . . "there is not the slightest reason to question, that both Light and Dark Brahmas may have been derived from the one stock introduced into Connecticut by Mr. Chamberlin" (when?) "and afterwards fostered by Mr. Cornish and Dr. Bennett." . . . "The testimony (Mr. Cornish's), so full and explicit, *must* be considered finally to settle this question" —of the origin and "importation" of the Chamberlin-Cornish pair of fowls.

We have shown, in this volume, that *no* ship "arrived at New York from Luckipoor in India," either in 1849 or 1846, as Cornish states in his two letters of 1852 and 1869. We have also shown that no such "East-India vessel" arrived in New York in 1847, as a later writer has it. And we have adduced ample recorded evidence, dating *long prior to the appearance of Cornish, or his fowls in public,* which shows that the Burnham "Gray Shanghaes" had been seen, talked about, written of, pictured, published in the poultry papers and books; and were everywhere known, as early as in 1849, to be "at the head of the list of modern domestic varieties" at that period in the world. And it will thus be seen that all there is to this controversy is, therefore, resolved into the following simple facts, to wit: —

The Chamberlin-Cornish-Bennett pair of large Gray fowls were first seen "in Connecticut in the early part of 1849," in Chamberlin's hands. They were stated to have been picked up *somewhere,* by "a sailor," who "bought them at a great price" ($5.00 the pair, so Chamberlin tells Plaisted in 1874); and Cornish bought his stock the next year of Chamberlin, in 1850. In 1851 or 1852, a Mr. Hatch exhibited a few young Light Gray chickens, which *he* called "Chittagongs." Cornish says the name Brahmapootra "was established in 1850." Mr. Plaisted says, "in all Cornish's state-

ments to Wright, Cornish is one year earlier in date than he ought to be." *

But there was positively no "*importation*" of this pair of fowls, at all. This is a sure thing. They were purchased for Chamberlin unquestionably from my stock, sold into Connecticut and New York long before 1852, when Cornish's first letter is *dated;* though this letter did not get before the public until it appeared in "The Domestic Poultry Book" in New York (which very few persons ever saw), and in Miss Watts's "Poultry Yard," in 1853 or 1854, in London. And I have also shown by the judges' official reports at the exhibitions of 1852 and 1854, in Boston and New York, that the name Brahmapootra was not even *then* fixed upon; although Cornish avers, in his last letter to Weld, "that this name was established in 1850."

It may possibly savor of undue curiosity in me; but *I* would like, for one, to know where this fabled stock was in 1849, for instance, when the first great fowl show took place, in the month of November of that year, at the Public Garden, in Boston? *Here* is a glorious opportunity now for Weld, Cornish, Wright, or some other "live man" (Dr. Bennett is dead, unfortunately), to give us some *new* version in answer to this pertinent query, namely; *if* the Chamberlin-Cornish fowls *did* come "into Connecticut in 1846," and Cornish "bought the first brood in 1847, and the old pair † in April, 1848," as he "explicitly" states he did in his second (1869) letter to Weld, — and he had then been breeding them three years, of course, — where were all these fowls on the 15th and 16th of the eleventh month of the year 1849, when all New England was astir with the fowl mania when the first exhibition came off in Boston?

This question suggests itself to me for the first time as I write these lines, in the month of July, 1874. And I turn once more to the printed records which I find in Dr. Bennett's Poultry Book, issued in March, 1850, and in the Boston agricultural papers of December, 1849. I now quote from the official report of the November (1849) show, — Col. Jaques of "Ten Hills Farm," President, and Chairman of the Committee of Supervision: —

"This exhibition may be said to have been in its character unprecedented

* "I do not consider Cornish's stories worth a pin. There is nothing 'accurate' in his *first* statement, and his *last* one is still worse!" [C. C. PLAISTED, in Poultry World, 1874.]

† Mr. Plaisted thus writes in 1874: "Mr. Cornish did *not* purchase Chamberlin's first brood; neither did he *ever* own the 'old pair,' at any time — as I can prove."

in this country; . . . and the results have been peculiarly gratifying, both as regards the number and variety and the quality of the different breeds of poultry shown, and the interest manifested in this display by the public. . . . The number of specimens of the different feathered races presented on this occasion was 1,423; the number of exhibitors was 219 recorded. The number of people admitted to this show was not less than *ten thousand*. . . . Of the gallinaceous family, the display was very extensive. . . . Several varieties were offered under the names of *Chinas, Cochin Chinas, Shanghaes, Bucks County, Jersey Blues,* and *Javas*" (ne'er a "Brahmapootra," a "Chittagong," or a "Bother'em" *then* in the entire category!), "and the exhibitors of which were J. Giles, Providence; J. W. French, Randolph; George P. Burnham, Roxbury; Francis Alden, Dedham; G. W. George, Haverhill; Adm. White, East Randolph; B. W. Balch, Dedham; A. A. Andrews, West Roxbury; T. Thorpe, Cambridge; Rev. C. B. Marsh, West Roxbury; H. L. Devereux, Boston; Messrs. Pierce and Osborn, Danvers; George E. White, Melrose; John C. Bennett, Plymouth; Samuel Jaques, Medford; Josiah H. Stickney, Watertown; John Eaton, Reading, and fifty-two others — *all* contributing specimens of the *Chinese*, or then so-called Asiatic races. . . . Under the head of *crosses* of various breeds and varieties, the committee would mention as worthy of notice the *Plymouth Rock Fowls*, so called by Dr. J. C. Bennett of Plymouth, and presented by George P. Burnham of Roxbury." (This was the *only* notable cross mentioned by the committee.) "The other contributors numbered 151, and entered the different varieties of Dorkings, Black Spanish, Games, Gueldres, Crested Fowls, Bantams, Hamburgs, Topknots," &c., &c.

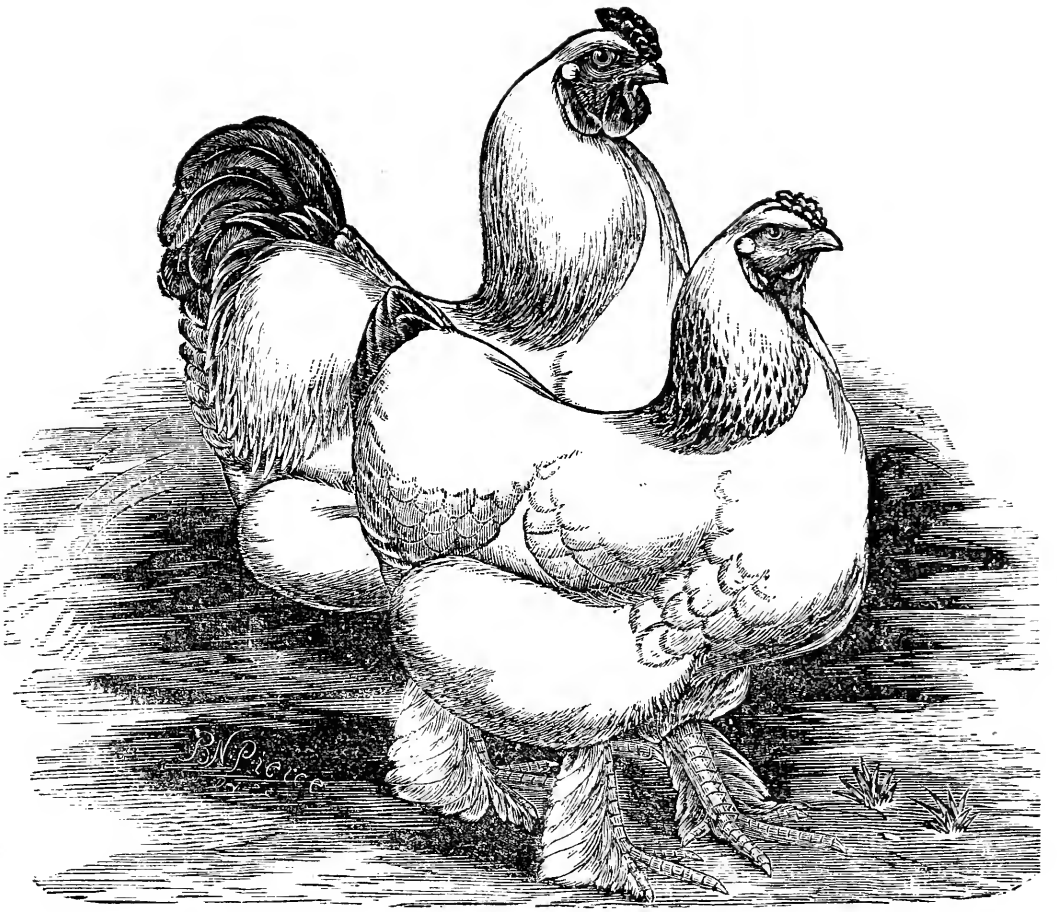
Here, in November, 1849, were shown nearly fifteen hundred specimens of the different kinds of fowls then known, from all quarters; and there were over two hundred contributors. But there were then no Chamberlins, no Cornishes, no Knoxes, no Welds, no Wrights, no Sailors, no "Brahmapootras, no "Chittagongs," mentioned; and these men, or their so-called fowls (which are lastly, in 1869, said to have been in Connecticut at that time over three years, *if* they came in 1846), were entirely unknown, unhonored, and unrepresented in that great New England exhibition! Verily, this *is* strange, if the 1869 statements of Cornish to Weld be *true*. And Mr. Lewis Wright can put the above facts into his pipe, and smoke them a good while, ere he will be able to answer my reiterated query: Where were your Cornish-Chamberlin Brahmapootras, of which, on page 144 of your "Brahma Fowl History," you declare "*the original importation is now determined*" (according to *your* sophistry) "*so early as in* 1846," and which must thus have been in Connecticut fully three years, "being fostered by Cornish and Dr. Bennett."

Where were they, I ask, on the occasion of *this* notable public fowl show in Boston, in November, 1849? Answer me *that*, Master Wright!

Why all these falsehoods and contradictions and inconsistencies about "one pair of Light Gray fowls" should have thus ever been originated or fostered by any or all of these people, and why Lewis Wright should thus back up this fabrication and deception with his added nonsense and sophistry and misrepresentations, is certainly inexplicable to ordinary comprehension, when it is beyond cavil or question that there were *no* "imported" birds involved in this sailor's story at all. There was *no* ship at New York, as stated; *no* sailor (according to Plaisted, who says in June, 1874, they "came in the hands of one Mr. Knox, clerk on a propeller running between Hartford and New York"); and, over and above all, when nobody from 1846, 1847, 1849, or 1852 has ever been able to tell us who any of the Cornish-described parties were, as at first mentioned, namely — sailor, owner, ship, captain, date, age of fowls, or any other *fact* bearing upon this interesting subject! It is all *myth.* It was false from the start. Dr. John C. Bennett *coined* this sailor's yarn originally, and the others tacitly agreed to it. The fowls were from my yards, or out of my stock. And Bennett never denied this in America or England, for he couldn't, had he wished to do so, while *I* lived; and *he knew this fact* as *I* did, which accounts for the non-mention of me in all those days!

All this occurred, according to Mr. Plaisted, in 1847 (not in 1849 or 1846, as Cornish has it, in two different places). But on all three of these occasions there is only one pair of gray fowls; Chamberlin is the first man who got them; and, every time, they came either "in the *India* ships" to New York, "in a ship from Luckipoor in *India*" to New York, or lastly "just arrived on an East *India* vessel" at New York.

In neither of which accounts *is there one word of truth,* as to the "importation" of these fowls; as I will in another chapter further on proceed to show, beyond the possibility of contradiction. The accounts I have quoted from Mr. Cornish's letters have long been before the public, and Lewis Wright has revamped and rehashed them both (most audaciously and bunglingly, I know,) in his two latest works. But there never was a syllable of truth in either, as Mr. Plaisted avers in 1874, when he writes, "I would ask Mr. Burnham what Cornish's accounts are worth, from first to last?" To which I can only reply, "Not much! Yet Lewis Wright makes the most of them, to be sure!"



PAIR OF LIGHT BRAHMAS, BRED BY DR. C. H. KENEGY, POLO, ILL.

SELECTION AND MATING,

TO BREED "STANDARD" BIRDS.

I DEEM it appropriate, after describing and portraying as I have done in the previous pages of this work the general history, characteristics, shape, color, and qualities of the China fowls we have had and now have in this country, to add a chapter here embodying my views, and briefly offering the results of my own experience, in the matter of *mating* or matching individual fowls, for the production of high-class specimens of the "Cochins" and "Brahmas" for the exhibition-rooms.

"Like will produce its like," is an old adage. As a rule, this is truthful. It depends in a great measure, in the reproduction of the *fowl* species, how-

ever, upon what the character of the stock to be duplicated is; how long the strains may have been bred in-and-in (through relations); how pure it was originally; and how it is subsequently *mated* (the males with the females),— whether or not success will follow, even upon the most carefully planned experiments attempted in this direction.

Darwin, in his exhaustive work on the "Variations of Animals," states that "the reproductive system is highly susceptible to changes in the conditions of life; but *why* — because this reproducing system is disturbed — this or that part should vary more or less, we are profoundly ignorant. Yet we can here and there catch a faint ray of light." And among these "faint rays" is this important one, namely, the clearly apparent influence of the male *first* having fruitful intercourse with the female, *upon her subsequent offspring* by *other* males. In demonstration of this point, we quote the annexed fact, related by Sir Edward Home: "A young chestnut mare, of seven-eighths Arabian blood, which belonged to the Earl of Morton, was served in the year 1815 by a *quagga*, — a species of native wild ass, from Africa, whose skin-markings are not unlike those of the zebra. This seven-eighths Arabian mare was covered but *once* by this quagga (by way of experiment), and gave birth to a hybrid colt, which had, as was anticipated, the distinct markings of the striped quagga, in the shape of head, black bars on legs, shoulders, &c. In 1817, 1818, and 1821, two, three, and six years afterwards, this same mare was served by a fine black full-bred Arabian stallion, and she threw three colts in those years. Although she had not seen the quagga since 1816, *all* these colts bore his curious and unequivocal markings."

Numerous instances of this kind could be cited, and the principle is clearly established among horse and cattle breeders. Mr. James McGilivray, a noted Scotch veterinary surgeon, has stated, sensibly, that "when *once* a pure animal of *any* breed has been pregnant to an animal of another breed, such pregnant animal *is a cross forever*, incapable of producing pure progeny, afterwards, of any breed." This result — under similar treatment — in any race of animals, is the same; whether it be horses, cattle, rabbits, sheep, dogs, or poultry. I have proved this, beyond question, in repeated instances of careful practical experiment; and I can affirm that this is *so* with whatever animal it may be attempted.

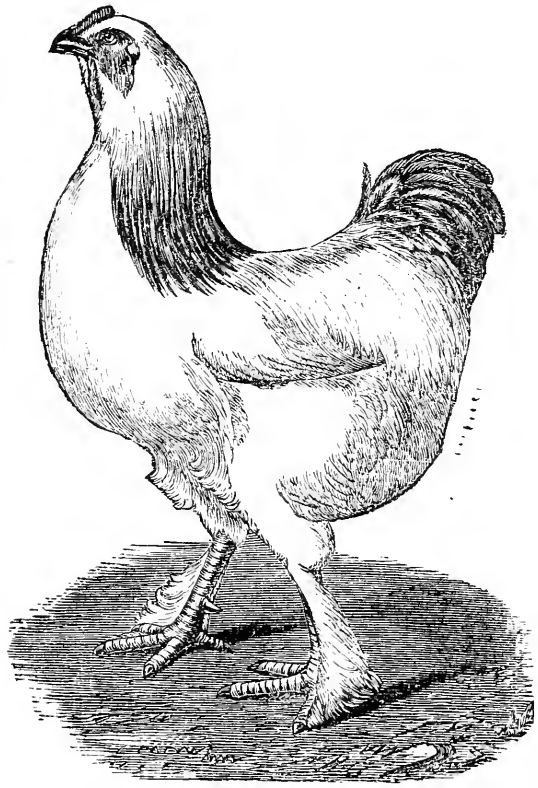
The attention of Mr. Darwin was called to this fact through certain results

of experiments tried by Messieurs Corbie and Botard, with pigeons — and he adds, "I was thus led to make my experiments with *fowls*. I selected long-established, pure breeds, in which there was not a known trace of *red* (in their color), yet, in several of the progeny, feathers of this color appeared. One magnificent bird, the offspring of a Black Spanish cock, and a White Silky hen, came colored almost exactly like the wild Bankiva cock. Now, all who know anything of the breeding of poultry, know that tens of thousands of pure Black Spanish, and of pure White Silky fowls have been reared, without the appearance of a *red* feather."

Mr. Tegetmeier speaks of the frequent appearance, in crossed fowls, of *pencilled*, or transversely-barred feathers, like those common to many gallinaceous birds, the Chinese varieties, notably, as being apparently an instance of *reversion* to a characteristic in color, formerly possessed by some ancient progenitor of the family. The so-called "Himalayan" rabbit is of a snow-white body, with black ears, nose, tail, and feet; and it reproduces its like perfectly true. Yet this race is known to have been formed by a union of two varieties of *silver-gray* rabbits. Now, if the Himalayan doe be crossed with a sandy-colored buck, a silver-gray rabbit is the product; which is evidently another case of reversion to one of the original parent varieties.

In the case of *poultry*, take our quite modern "Plymouth Rock" variety, which the latest American Standard recognizes as "a breed." We know where and when this "breed" (or cross), was originated; and, perhaps the best specimens we see, are those produced in Connecticut, from a union of the Black Java with the Dominique bird. Both *these* original fowls breed their like in their purity, very accurately, as is well known — and the so-called "Plymouth Rocks," *produced in this way*, from the union of the original strong blood mentioned, prove very uniformly, good-colored specimens. The *progeny*, however, bred together, come imperfect in color, and undecided in markings of plumage, at once; "throwing back," naturally to the Black Java, or clear Dominique in color, in greater or less degree, and inevitably. And the progeny of this *cross* continued to be bred "in-and-in," however cautiously we may make our selections, can *never* be bred satisfactorily to produce in succession the color, at all uniform, which the *first* product of the pure Java and the Dominique gives. This is a prime law of Nature, and it cannot be changed.

The accompanying cut portrays a recent ideal specimen of what is called the Felch strain of the Chamberlin stock. This picture represents a young cock, with very dark pencilled neck-hackles, of good depth, well up on the legs, full breasted, and of tasteful shape and carriage. Mr. Felch says, they have been called the "pouter-pigeon strain." I do not see the aptness of the title. This cock is a well-modelled bird, but the picture is again a "fancy" design. Not one sample, surely, in a hundred can be produced, so perfect in symmetry as this delineation indicates; though, perhaps, such methodical breeders as Messrs. Felch may occasionally find among theirs a single cock that would approach this figure, in comeliness.



DARK-HACKLED "LIGHT BRAHMA" COCKEREL.

The "pencilled" feathering upon the *Brahmas*, light or dark, and the same characteristic observable in the different colored *Cochins* of the present day, is one of the most marked and invariable points in the plumage of this race that it possesses. And no one who has bred any variety of these Chinese fowls, but will have observed that this conformation is universally prevalent, in some degree of development, upon *every* specimen produced, from whatever "strain" or stock the fancier may chance to possess, either in this country, or in Great Britain. This "pencilling" of clear white and black was a notable characteristic in the plumage of the original Shanghaes, of my own importations, of all colors, and especially on the Light and Dark Brahmas. It is seen to-day, in *every* instance, more or less prominently, in the progeny of these importations, wherever this stock is bred; and the so-claimed Chamberlin-Cornish variety exhibits it, invariably. The Partridge and

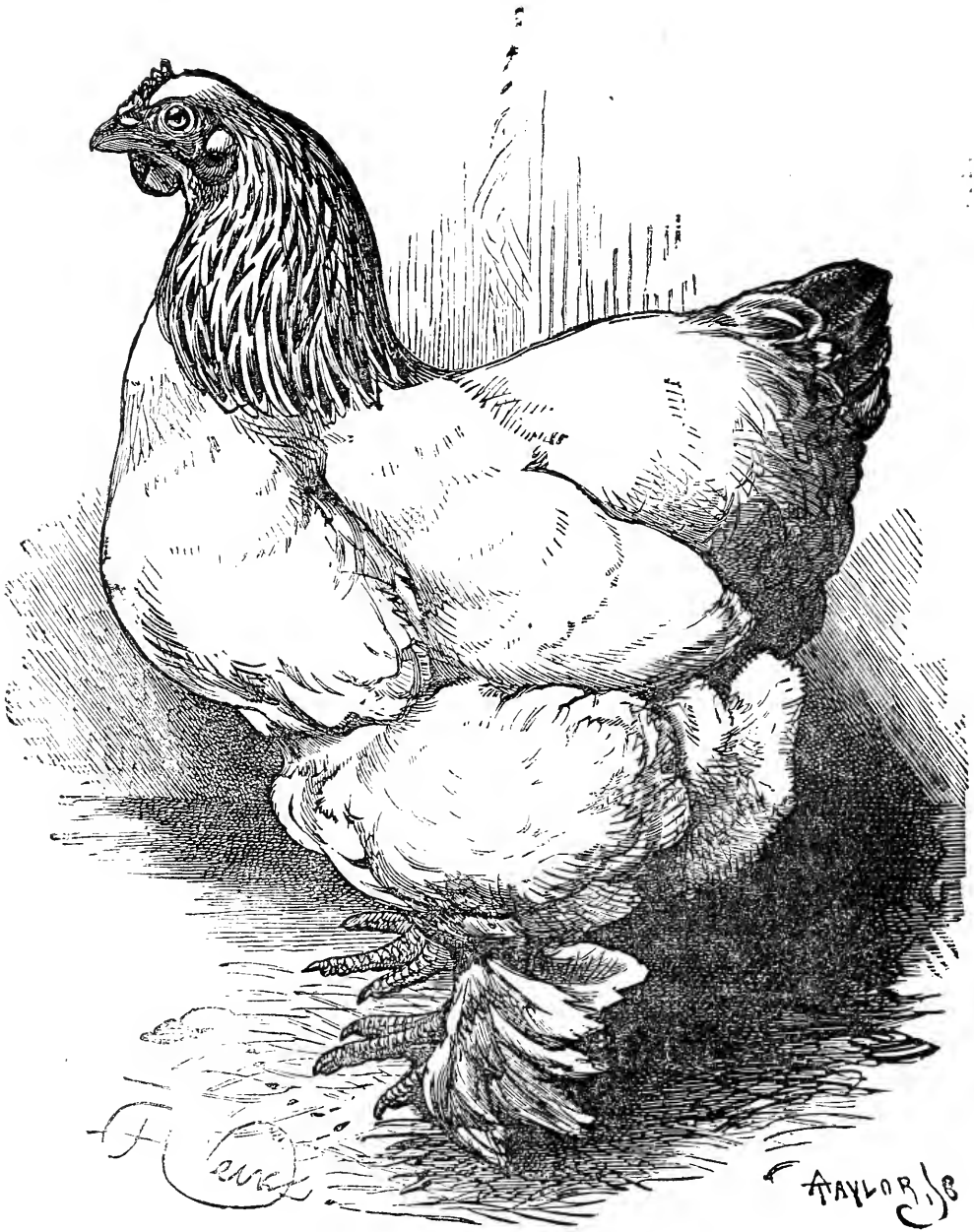
Grouse Cochins show this feature as perfectly as do any variety, however dark or light their body-plumage otherwise may be. In any and every *cross* made with these varieties upon other pure breeds — say with the Dorking, the Black Spanish, the Leghorn, or otherwise, the "pencilled" hackle, or saddle-feathering, will inevitably show itself; and *this* marking can never be bred out of stock into which it has once been introduced.

In mating for breeding birds of any particular *caste* of plumage, with these varieties — that is to say, of lighter and darker pluming, or darker or lighter hackle-feather, it is necessary towards the production of a particular style of feathering, *first* to select such birds as you may have some knowledge of, that are fairly established in their color in a *general* way. From such strain or variety, *secondly*, it is requisite that you choose birds (to furnish you with the desired colored progeny), that are properly marked in one way for *males*, and in another way for *females*. And this is a nice undertaking, altogether.

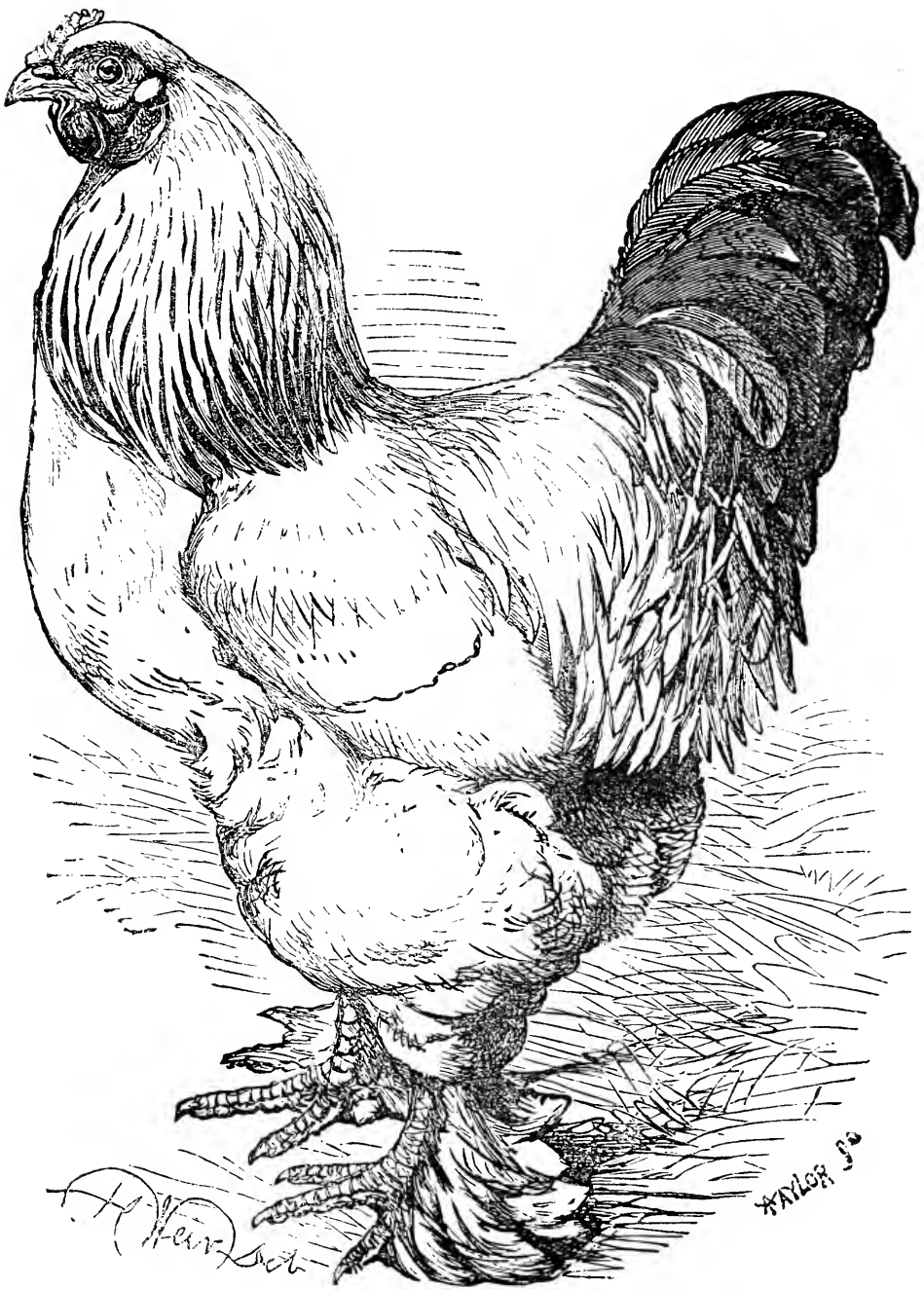
Still, the experiment is an exceedingly interesting operation. For the show-room, to *win* in competition, your standard requires, for example, with Light Brahmas, that the cock shall be of good weight, not less than 12 lbs., or the cockerel not less than 10 lbs., the hen 10 to 11 lbs., and the pullet 8 to 10 lbs. This variety must have the pea-comb, firm and straight; the cock's head broad and straight; neck long, well arched, and pencilling on hackles distinctly marked; body plumage clean white and black; fluff rich and soft, and heavily feathered legs, without "hock-feathers," &c. The hen must be similar in color, with the pencilling of the neck flowing well down to the shoulders, and clearly defined. Now it is desirable to produce these show-birds as near to perfection as it is possible to attain, and the younger fancier is desirous to know how he shall accomplish this.

As I have said, this is not easy to compass. It can result only through careful manipulation, and it does not usually occur without *repeated* experiments; though, with proper caution, and the exercise of fair common sense, the chances are in favor of a successful result, at any time. I have bred a great many birds, and I have been often disappointed; and, on the other hand, I have frequently realized extraordinary success, when I least expected it, in my experimental experience.

I have found, as a good general rule, with the Light Brahmas, in order to



ENGLISH PRIZE "LIGHT BRAHMA" HEN, TWO YEARS OLD, 1872, '73.



ENGLISH PRIZE "LIGHT BRAHMA" COCK, 2 YEARS OLD, 1872, '73.

breed a *majority* of the beautiful, so much admired, medium-pencilled-necked pullets, in a given number of chickens, that a good vigorous ten and a half to eleven pound light hackled cock, see p. 115, at head of this chapter, short-legged, fully feathered on shank to the toes, with head well up, generous wattles, short full inclining (not upright) tail, square body, and *flat* saddle, coupled with longish-legged hens (or pullets) of pure white bodies, black tipped lower wing feathers, clear black short tail, good fluffy thighs, heavily feathered shanks to the toes, small head and wattle, and a distinct, full, well defined neck-hackle quite *dark* and even in "pencilling," are the best to mate in male and females, for the *average* production of these desirably plumed PULLETS. This union will give you more rich medium-pencilled evenly hackled pullets than otherwise. The *cocks* that eventuate from such a union will not *all* be what you desire. And, if you wish to breed the more perfect hue of MALE birds, I recommend the *reverse* of this plan, in the parent stock. The hens may be lighter neck-hackled, and the parent-cock should be full *dark*-necked, with the other characteristics as above described.

If the back quarters of the saddle-hackles have the slightest tinge of palest straw-color splashed through the white depending mass, upon the breeding-cocks, I have found it no objection. My original cocks both carried this feathering upon the rear saddles; and I have found that this creamy tint in the male, at this point, gave me more evenly colored young cocks than when bred from those having the blank white hackling, *en masse*, at this extremity of the long back feathers.

We present on pages 120 and 121 two spirited pictures of representative English-bred Light Brahmas, drawn by Harrison Weir of London; a mature cock and hen. The male bird is *not* the style of Light Brahma we fancy in this country, however, and we give place to the drawing simply for purposes of comparison. Such a tail or rump as *this* upon a "Brahma" cock, in an American exhibition room, would disqualify the bird at sight, in the opinion of a competent judge of this variety of fowl, whatever other good points he might possess. While, for breeding purposes, he wouldn't be worth a shilling in a Yankee fancier's yard. His legs are too short, also, and his neck is similarly faulty. There is the evident presence of blood "foreign" to the true American Brahma in this cock's composition, and an unmistakable mixture of the big-tailed, squatty white Dorking in his figure.

Yet this is a fair type of many of the English Brahmas bred in 1872 to 1874. The hen is better, but her legs are too short for her large-framed body; her neck is similarly objectionable; the head of both cock and hen are by far too coarse for a first-class thorough-bred Light Brahma, as we produce them now in this country; and both partake too strongly of the pattern of the duck-legged, clumsy, badly-bred modern English "Cochin," of late years frequently to be met with among the "importations" from Great Britain, from unreliable sources; of which *latter* variety we have seen several samples that have been got out at high cost, which exhibited unmistakable evidence of the admixture in their breeding of the gray Dorking blood, more especially observable, too, in some of the later Dark Brahmas received here from England in recent years.

Upon page 126 may also be found a fine drawing by this same English artist, of a young Light Brahma pullet at ten months old, whose general form, in this instance, for her age, is very much more like what is deemed in the United States about *the* thing; though it will be said by close breeders, familiar with the nice points in this variety, that the shanks of this young fowl are rather long in proportion to the body. The *pullet*, in this respect, we do not think could be so greatly improved. To produce *good* pullets, we have found it indispensable that the parent hens bred from *must* be longish-legged. The cock delineated on page 125 is, to be sure, pretty well "up in the world." But he is a young bird, and the form will naturally settle down considerably with age. If his limbs were a trifle shorter, we should like him better. In *color* and pencilling both these specimens are fine, though they would not answer to *mate*, if the owner desired to reproduce likenesses of this pair. For average chickens marked like these, this cock should be bred to darker-hackled hens; and a pullet marked as this is, would be better mated, for *breeding*, to a much lighter-necked cock. In the show-pen, however, such a pair of ten-months' old birds as these "portraits" represent, are seldom seen; but *when* found together, they are pretty sure to win, with average fair judges at exhibitions.

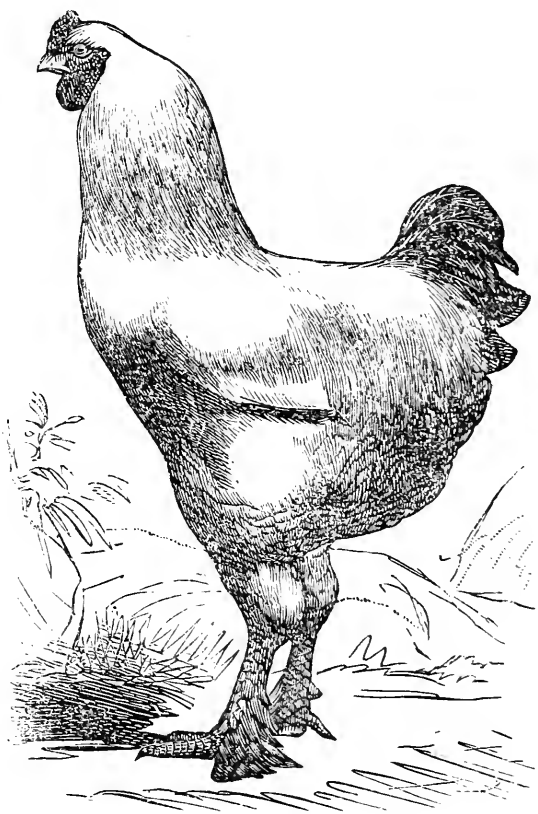
I am aware of the opinions of other breeders upon this subject, who differ with me; but I speak from my own experience in the matter of the preponderating influence of the *male* in poultry-producing. The impress of the cock upon the progeny is much more remarkable, within my knowledge, than that

of the hens, in all varieties of fowl. I incline to this opinion from the existence of one important fact; and that is, that the male bird is *alone* in his harem usually. His "life-principle" is distributed among a flock of a dozen females, or less. They are constantly in his company. They meet with no other male birds (I am now speaking of close, clean breeding); and the stamp of this one male operates to reproduce among his wives, as a rule, a likeness of himself, naturally. The power, mettle, greater strength, and sturdier characteristics of the male, are thus brought to bear, of themselves, directly upon one point; and his mates being continually with him, and him only, for the time being, *as* naturally "reflect his image" in form, color, and points (in the main) in their progeny.

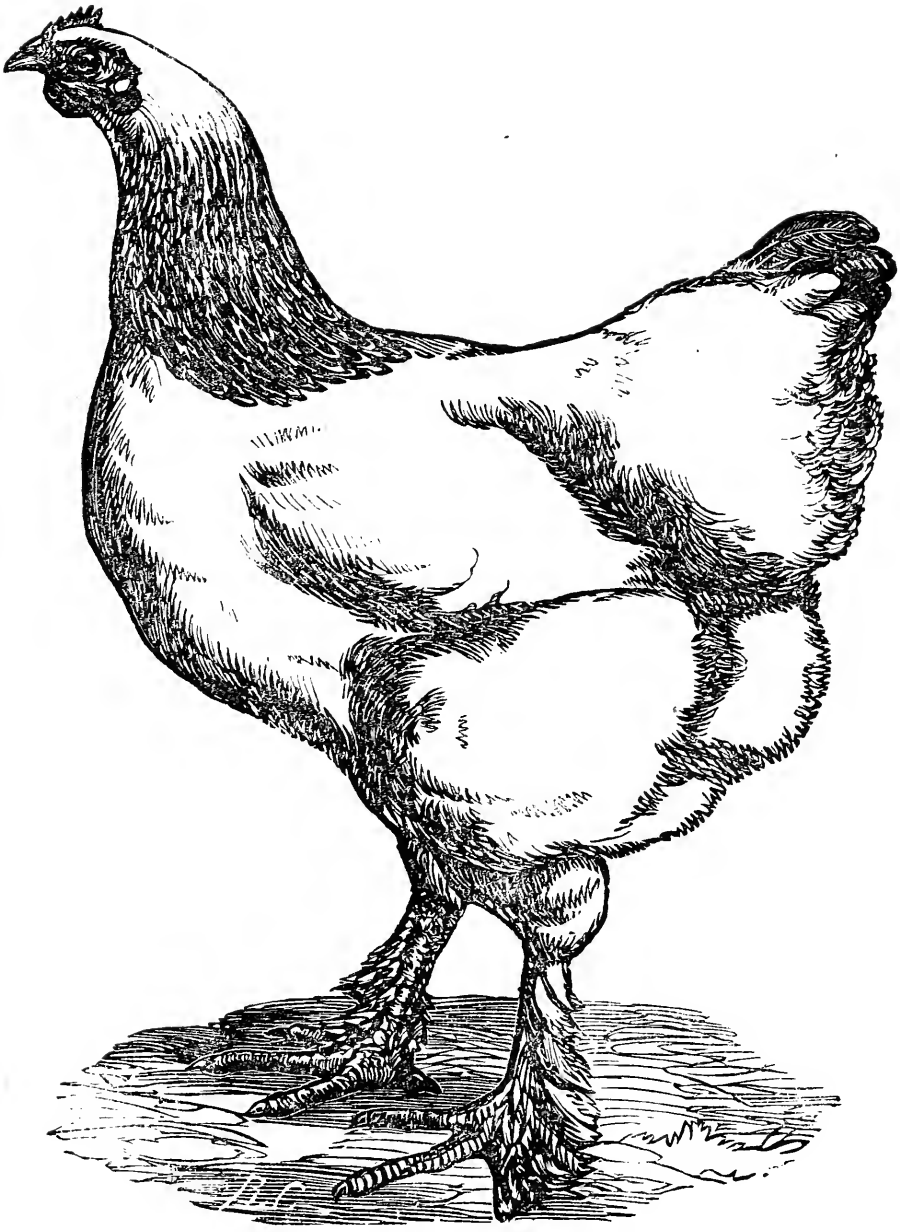
A writer in "The Poultry World" says to another, "The cause of a second litter of chicks resembling the Houdan cock" (which had been allowed to run with Light Brahma hens a few days, carelessly, but which was then taken away, and a Light Brahma cock substituted), "is explained by a natural law well known to breeders; viz., that, when a hen is pregnant to a cock of a different breed, *she is a cross ever after*, the purity of her blood being lost in consequence of her connection with a cock of foreign blood. She is then a cross forever, and cannot produce a pure chick of any breed. This law is applicable to all our domestic animals." This is to the point; and it will so operate, in every instance, with fowls, sooner or later, in *all* cases where a cock of a different breed or color is even permitted once to associate with such other variety of hens; thus showing the immense preponderance of influence of the male over that of the female, for breeding to either color or points.

I have in my mind at this moment the *theory* of a well-known Light Brahma breeder, who has produced a great many fine birds, who contends that this matter of crossing a fowl temporarily does it no injury as to the future pure breeding of the birds. This same gentleman is a stickler for "pedigree fowl stock," too, about which he writes fluently. *His* notion is, in brief, that "there is no union of circulation between the embryo-chick and the hen-mother;" that is, between the egg and the layer of it, I suppose: and therefore this principle is not, in his opinion, analogous in *poultry* to the relations existing between the mother-*animal* and her progeny. But I do not see the force of this position; and I feel very confident, that, whatever may be the

published *arguments* of this breeder regarding his notions on this subject, he would not run the risk of thus permitting any of his breeding-hens to be approached, for a single interview, by a strange cock, particularly of a different color or variety to that of his selected Light Brahma pedigreed males, with any *hope* that he could ever retrieve his favorite female birds from the certain contamination that would succeed such "temporary union." It is one thing to preach, and quite another to practice. And I am quite sure this gentleman, who *writes* so cleverly upon this point, is too skilful a breeder ever to venture upon the fallacy I have hinted at, so long as he undertakes to produce, and sell for genuine, any "pedigree Brahmas."



The annexed illustration represents a model young cock of the so-called Cornish-Chamberlin strain of "Light Brahmas," which Mr. C. C. Plaisted of Connecticut states, in August, 1874, he has been breeding from during the present season. Having examined Mr. Plaisted's stock in his runs this summer, I am constrained to say that this picture does not do his fine birds justice, at all. But this cut is put forth to represent his "Chamberlin strain," as *he* has perfected it, after breeding this same stock steadily for some twenty years, so he affirms. The reader can judge, by referring to other authentic drawings in this volume, how nearly this strain (from the delineations given by different artists) is like my *original* Light Grays, and Dr. Bennett's, as portrayed in 1850, '51, '52, on pages 67, 69, and 137, 138. In this upright, long, rangy outline, the distinction (if there be any) presents but the slightest difference, to our eye. And this portrait in 1874 only goes to confirm my early and "chronic"



A GOOD TYPE OF MODERN LIGHT BRAHMA PULLET, 10 MONTHS OLD,
As bred in the United States, in the last seven years.

opinion, that *all* this stock comes from the same original parentage, — to wit, my first two lots of "Gray Shanghaes," of 1849 and '50.*

Upon the subject of the point in Brahmas known as the *pea-comb*, — which fowls of both colors and sexes must nowadays have nicely developed to qualify them to compete in the show-rooms, — I have to say that this peculiar formation was also original in America, and that Dr. John C. Bennett thus named it at an early day. And below I give an extract from an article furnished by me to "The London Poultry Review," in the spring of 1874: —

"I will briefly refer in this paper to a peculiar characteristic of this race of poultry, which has been the cause of much discussion; and that is the pea-comb of the Brahmas. One English writer says, 'The only difficult point with the Brahmas is their variety of comb.' Another asserts that 'the pea-combed Brahma cannot be a *Shanghae* fowl.' Well, let us see about this. A third adds, 'If it be so, and if Brother Jonathan made it, I wish he would make us something more.' That Brother Jonathan *did* make the pea-comb originally, nobody questions. That Dr. Bennett gave this comb its name, we all know.

"He called my attention to this peculiarity the year after I received my second lot of Grays from Shanghae direct; and, though we all bred both single and pea-comb Brahmas for years afterwards, this feature originated with *my* stock. And not until the third or fourth year after its first discovery, did we undertake to breed the pea-comb, *uniformly*. The first birds you

* In regard to the names "Gray Shanghae" and "Chittagong," it may be well to state, at this point, as to the origin of my *first* pair of Grays, that some persons appear to have got the impression that these *two identical birds* were "imported from Shanghae." I have always stated very clearly that this pair were obtained by me from Dr. J. J. Kerr of Philadelphia, who wrote me September 3, 1849, that, "although they were then called 'Chittagongs,' they came out of Chinese stock, and were bred *from* birds imported from *Shanghae*, into Pennsylvania." Hence I called them "Gray Shanghaes," after getting my *second* lot of lighter-colored Grays through Mr. Porter of New York, in 1850. Mr. Cornish, Mr. Chamberlin, Mr. Hatch, Dr. Kerr, Dr. Bennett, Mr. George, and myself called *all* this light gray stock "Chittagong" at first; and none of us knew any thing about different "strains" (if any ever existed) until the "Brahma Pootra" title began to be bruited, in 1851, '52. I never heard that anybody pretended that the original Dr. Kerr pair had a history apart from this; viz., that they were the only light *gray* fowls then known, of this class of birds, and that they were bred out of stock imported into Pennsylvania, from China, some two years before I received them; the color of which imported *parent* stock I never inquired about, nor do I now know whether it was originally black, white, or blue. And I have never yet deemed this to be of the slightest consequence, since I know how perfectly in color these Grays have bred, from 1849 and '50 down to the present day. — G. P. B.

had in England were mostly single-combed; and to-day, in our best yards, we occasionally meet with fine Light Brahmas having the single comb. But these latter are thus disqualified for exhibition, at the present time.

"Now I propose to give you 'something more' akin to what the writer alludes to above, in the way of pea-comb. The Dark Brahmas, as well as the Light variety, must have the pea-comb to make them pass muster with the judges at the shows, as we are all now aware. And why? Because everybody is satisfied that this style is the best for cold climates, the prettiest, the neatest head-ornament for a large fowl of either sex, and, more especially, because it is a peculiarity of the Brahmas, and no other fowl carries it. 'It is a distinguishing mark of the purity of this variety,' writes one enthusiastic gentleman. Another (in Tegetmeier's last edition) says, 'Mr. Burnham declares they are Shanghaes (Cochins now). If they *are* Shanghaes, will the advocates of this opinion tell me if they ever bred Buffs, Cinnamons, or Grouse, with pea-combs?' And this brings me to the point I am about to present, in direct reply to this gentleman.

"For four years past, I have been watching this very thing, in its perfect development, in both the Grouse and Partridge Cochins in this town [Melrose]. A very careful breeder discovered amongst his *Partridge* Cochins (four years ago) a few chickens, cocks and pullets, clearly marked with this pea-comb. He could not account for it. He had only this breed on his premises. He has never had any others since. He has bred from the pea-comb birds only, selected them the second year, then culled them the third; and the fourth season he put into the Massachusetts show (in 1874) several cages of as perfect pea-combed Partridge Cochins as ever were grown. Nobody else that I ever saw has this variety. From seventy-five to a hundred — old and young — may now be seen in this gentleman's yards, fully developed with this 'peculiarity of the Brahmas.'

"They are not a *cross*. Never a taint of cross in any of them. The original stock came out of eggs laid by a Shanghae hen purchased from on shipboard. And there they are, to speak for themselves, precisely as the pea-comb was originally developed upon my imported Gray Shanghaes (or Brahmas) the second year I bred them, — accurate likenesses of which choice birds will be found upon pages 143, 153. This gentleman has not yet sold any fowls, and declines to do so. But he has got them, of all ages; and they are true pea-combed *Partridge* fowls. What becomes of Mr. Wright's theory on this subject, if this

is established in the Partridge, as we all know it now is, fairly, in the Brahmas? And why, as in the instance of the Brahmas, is not this a most valuable acquisition?

"Mr. Wright has contributed to poultry literature a vast amount of plausible and solid material; and usually he writes clearly and well. But the facts I have herein set down are at variance with much which this author has penned; and they dispose effectually of the theory suggested by the other English writer upon Brahmas, who triumphantly argues in his query, 'Will the advocates of this [my] opinion tell me if they have ever bred Grouse Cochins (Shanghaes) with pea-combs?' since the fancier I speak of has this year got out forty chickens, all pea-combed, from his stock; whilst a quartette of his year-old stock, placed in the hands of another person in Norfolk County, Massachusetts, have produced sixty more chickens in March and April, 1874, perfectly marked with this peculiar "pea" comb.

"I conclude this too lengthy article with these final assertions. No so-called Brahma fowls ever came from *India* in 1846, or at any other time, to America. *I* originated these fowls, now *called* Brahmas. I sent to England the first Light and Dark purely-bred Brahma birds you ever had there (as 'Gray Shanghaes'), or they went hence from *my* stock. And, lastly, the pea-comb has been established in America upon the Grouse or Partridge Cochins, as I have now informed you. And Brother Jonathan hasn't yet done with improving domestic poultry, as I trust we shall show in the future."

In those earliest days, the "fine points" upon our imported stock of Shanghaes were not appreciated by us. This pea-comb question was long a debatable one. Dr. Bennett claimed, for years after we discovered this peculiar formation, — which he first pointed out to me in my yards, — that the *single* comb was the true one for the Brahmas, though the *deviation* of this "pea-comb" (to which *he* gave this name, from its similarity in shape to a half-blown pea-blossom), he said *sometimes* occurred with this fowl. He didn't know whether it did, or not — when this opinion was given! Nor did any one else know, at that time. The appearance and final perfecting of this feature of the pea-comb upon our Gray birds was a surprise to us all; and a deal of labor followed, to establish it. It required several years of experiment and care to produce this head-ornament with any great degree of uniformity or success, as I have shown in the quoted opinions of all the original breeders of this stock, possessing *any* nominal strain. The Queen's birds were single-

combed, so far as I remember. Dr. Gwynne's early fowls were, seven-tenths of them, single-combed; and these he received from Bennett and Plaisted, who bred the Cornish-Chamberlin strain (so Mr. Plaisted says), and the Burnham strain (so Dr. Bennett says); see pages 80 to 85, for these authoritative statements. And even up to this day, more or less of the Light Brahmas are bred, of anybody's stock, in any man's yards, with the up-right, single, serrated comb that Bennett claimed, at first, was the *proper* style of comb for this breed.

Even Cornish himself says (in 1869!) "I did notice the 'pea-comb' on my birds. It was not so with *all*." He does not say anything about this peculiar formation in his *first* account, dated March 2, 1852, I observe! And yet, according to his *last* "accurate" statement, he must then (in 1852) have had these birds in his possession (from September, 1846) fully six years! Did he "notice this pea-comb" on his birds before he wrote that first letter? If so, why was this peculiarity not mentioned by him? It certainly was a most extraordinary development! Nobody in America or England knew anything what this rare feature meant. Tegetmeier writes, as late as 1867, "this pea-comb was a great novelty with us in England." Another English writer then says, "in all our *crosses*, we have never met with anything like this!" I do not remember myself to have observed it till my second year of breeding with the second lot of Grays I obtained from Shanghae, *via* New York. It was a curious discovery, and it is decidedly a very desirable thing to breed as many pea-combed birds among our Brahmas as possible. But the single comb *will* appear, more or less, with the best families to-day, nevertheless.

This same Dr. Gwynne, whom Bennett, Tegetmeier, Plaisted, Burnham, Wright, and Miss Watts, all agree contributed one of the two *first* pens of Light Brahmas shown at Birmingham, England, and who himself declares, in Rev. Mr. Wingfield's London work, "I received from Dr. Bennett of the United States, in 1853, five pairs of these Cornish-Chamberlin fowls, — three only of which had the pea-comb," also, subsequently adds, regarding the Brahma pea-comb question, "All *I* can say on this point is, that out of twenty chickens bred for myself out of three of the ten birds received from Dr. Bennett of the United States, I cannot detect a single 'deviation' among them *from the* SINGLE comb of the parents." And yet it is claimed by Lewis Wright that "this pea-comb *alone* is absolute evidence of the antiquity and *purity* of the Cornish-Bennett fowls over Burnham's mongrels!"

In mating the Buff, the White, or the Black Cochins, there are no such

PEA-COMBED PARTRIDGE COCHIN COCK, 2 YEARS OLD 1874.
From the original stock of C. H. Edmonds, Melrose, Mass.

requirements as I have described, inasmuch as there is but one general color, each to be sought for in these different varieties. But with the Partridge Cochins, the pencilling of the neck and back-hackles and the markings of the body-feathering, as in the Dark Brahmas also, comes a nice point again, in mating for breeding, to produce the desired fashionable "Standard" specimens of fowls.

The Partridge Cochins, and the Grouse Cochins are very similar in general hue, both being of a rich deep brown, with similar markings and pencillings; except that one is of a reddish tinge (in the lighter plumage), and the other golden bay, or a deep orange tint, in the more brilliant parts of the general ground-feathering in the *hens*. The colors of the Partridge or the Grouse cock (of the most acceptable character), are but slightly different in each. Those tints that are best understood as applicable to the superb "black and red Game Cock," are in the main the most desirable. The breast, thighs, and under body-color of the male Partridge Cochin should be clear *black*, to accord with the "Standard" requirement. Tail and base-feathers, metallic black. Hackles "pencilled," orange and black, &c. These for the show-birds.

But, for mating to *breed* them, the presence of brown feathers sparsely interspersed upon the breast, flanks, and thighs, is (in my experience) the better indication towards producing finely marked *pullet* chicks. And I have found, in a large majority of cases, that a good, vigorous, well formed two year-old cock, with this style of marking, would throw finer pullets than the dead-black breasted birds. But to breed the others (cock chicks), the black breasted male, and the *darkest* brown hens are the best, of course; and all these, I repeat it, are nice points, resulting satisfactorily only through careful studied experiment, oftentimes necessarily long continued. And *here* it is that the theory of "constant *selection*" of the best birds in your breeding stock comes in, pertinently.

I understand perfectly well that this principle is a *good*, if not the true method. In all cases, whatever the opinions or experience of the fancier may be, the *successful* breeder resorts to this mode in his breeding. I wouldn't give a row of pins, for example, for a Cochin or Brahma cock-bird, to *breed* from, that turned the scales, in weight, at over twelve pounds. I prefer one at eleven pounds, even; provided he be "well up on his pins," courageous, healthy, well pointed, not leggy, squarely framed for a Cochin, and perhaps a little more "rangy" in form for a Brahma. And I prefer my pullets, or

hens, in proportion higher on the leg considerably, to be mated to such cocks. Both should be well *marked* in plumage, as I have described; and all should be kept in "high condition," without permitting them to get fat while being bred. With such birds, of good stock, you may count on very good chickens in the average.

And yet, in spite of all, you must be prepared to be often disappointed. *Why* it is, that freaks in Nature occur so frequently in one's experience, do what the breeder may, is altogether inexplicable. Many fanciers there be who are prone to the recounting of strange stories about their favorite strains of stock, and of their continuous and wondrous success with certain varieties, bred from some imaginary "early imported bloods," which would be counted certainly marvellous if the tales could be verified. But *I* have met with so many ups and downs in chicken-raising, and I have been so often deceived in my anticipations, first and last, that I do not calculate very accurately upon any thing coming exactly like its parentage, when I start out with new bloods, of late years, that "have taken first prizes," for example, or that come down from "Confucius" and "Hebe," with a pedigree "much longer than my arm."

In mating such samples (and I have tried this more than once, to my cost), the *progeny* do not often come up to the mark. They have been badly mated in *previous* generations. The individual fowls thus purchased have been rare samples to behold of their accredited race, frequently, and I have anticipated "stunning results" from the eggs laid by these fine looking specimens, that had "won first premiums;" and for which, on more than one occasion within my remembrance, I have cheerfully paid down fifty to one hundred dollars each, in the exhibition-room.

I have sold eggs from these very fowls, at almost fabulous rates, in good faith, and believed, as did the parties I bought of and sold to, that we had something rare indeed in the poultry way. And I have not only been wofully disappointed myself, in the first or second hatchings from such fowls, but I have been compelled subsequently to endure the anathemas of inconsiderate patrons, for sending them at high cost, eggs that produced chickens of almost *any* color save that of the birds which laid those eggs. But the parent fowls had been contaminated before they reached *my* hands, and I bred from them only what Nature gave me, through this impure channel.

Thus I say it is well that, in selecting your original breeding-stock, you

pay attention to obtaining it out of a strain that you know to be as pure as can be had, itself, first. Then by mating your birds in the way I have now briefly indicated, you may, as a rule, calculate upon getting a *majority* of chickens that will answer your expectations in color and features.

We give place to fine plate illustrations on pages 133 and 143, of the new *Pea-combed Partridge* fowls, a cock and hen — two years old — bred from imported Chinese blood, and fostered by C. H. Edmonds, Esq., of Melrose, Mass., for the last four or five years. The pictures are faithful representations of these two mature fowls, which for size, color, markings, rotundity of form, and good make-up, throughout, are excelled by no specimens of the Cochin varieties that we have ever met with.

That the pea comb is now a desideratum upon the *Brahmas*, Light and Dark, is already decided upon. The production of a new variety of the *Cochins* possessing this marked peculiarity, uniformly, is certainly a grand improvement upon the old style of single upright comb, especially for our cold northern American climate. That the establishment of this desirable feature has been accomplished, *permanently*, upon the Partridge variety, and that it has already been transmitted from Mr. Edmonds' original stock through five generations, down to the summer of 1874, is a fixed fact.

The stately trio of Dark Brahmas so nicely portrayed upon page 101, the property of Mr. S. H. Seamans, Wauwatosa, Wis., were imported by him in 1873, from England. The drawing is from the pencil of the celebrated J. W. Ludlow, and these beautiful birds have been winners of first prizes at the American Western shows, deservedly — being very perfect specimens of their kind, from which Mr. Seamans is now breeding, successfully.

Mr. Chamberlin himself has never "mentioned" any thing about any fowls, that I ever heard of, and *he* didn't go to New York for fowls, at all. Mr. *Cornish* said (in 1852) that "the Chamberlin fowls were brought into Connecticut in the early part of 1849." Then this same Mr. *Cornish* said (in 1869), "These fowls came in a ship" (which never arrived there) "to New York, in September, 1846."

This is all that has ever been known about that mythical "one pair of Grays," and all that ever will be known now, except what I have elsewhere stated in this work; viz., that *no* ship "arrived at New York from Luckipoor in India," either in 1849, first, or in 1846; or in 1847, as a later writer puts it. All these stories are false — as in the final chapter I will show.

The advocates of this pea-combed Chamberlin-gray-fowl theory are sadly indisposed to agree in their stories. Mr. Cornish, in 1852, as we have seen, did not know "the sailor" who found this pair of fowls.* Even in 1869, he says, "the sailor's name I never noted, and cannot give." In 1870, he adds (according to Wright), "my letters were written at an early day, when the parties who brought the fowls from India to New York" (the sailors of course) "were *living, and to be seen.* They *were* often seen," &c.

But, previously to this *last* letter, they had all died off, conveniently, at the right time, — so it was universally contended. And nothing could be learned further of these "all-obscure men," who could "give *no* account of the origin of these birds," as Cornish first avers in his 1852 letter! Yet, in 1874, we find that Mr. Plaisted good-humoredly resurrects them. In the "Poultry World" for August, this writer says, "the unknown sailor, of whom Mr. Cornish writes, and whom Mr. Burnham attempts to ridicule, 'still lives,' and will, I trust, take an important part in this feathered drama, now having such a remarkable run. When *he* comes on deck, let the unbelievers 'look out for squalls.' Like Captain Cuttle, he too will 'stand by,' and his opponents may be obliged to 'take to the long boat!'"

Now, we have not "attempted to ridicule" the "unknown sailor," at all. *He* was a perfectly harmless and unoffending party in this business, and he has been dead near twenty years! At least, so we have all been informed repeatedly by the Cornish men. If he is alive, so much the better for *him*, individually. But we think it is rather late in the day to trot this sailor out, *now;* though it may be, that, for Wright's and Cornish's purposes, this venerable salt will prove a Bunsby, indeed; and he may be able to give us "an opinion as *is* an opinion" on this vexing Bother-'em-Pootrum question. Still, we submit that it is not a little strange, during all the controversy that has occurred in a quarter of a century about the sailor-Cornish pair of Light-Gray fowls, that this ancient mariner has never before turned up!

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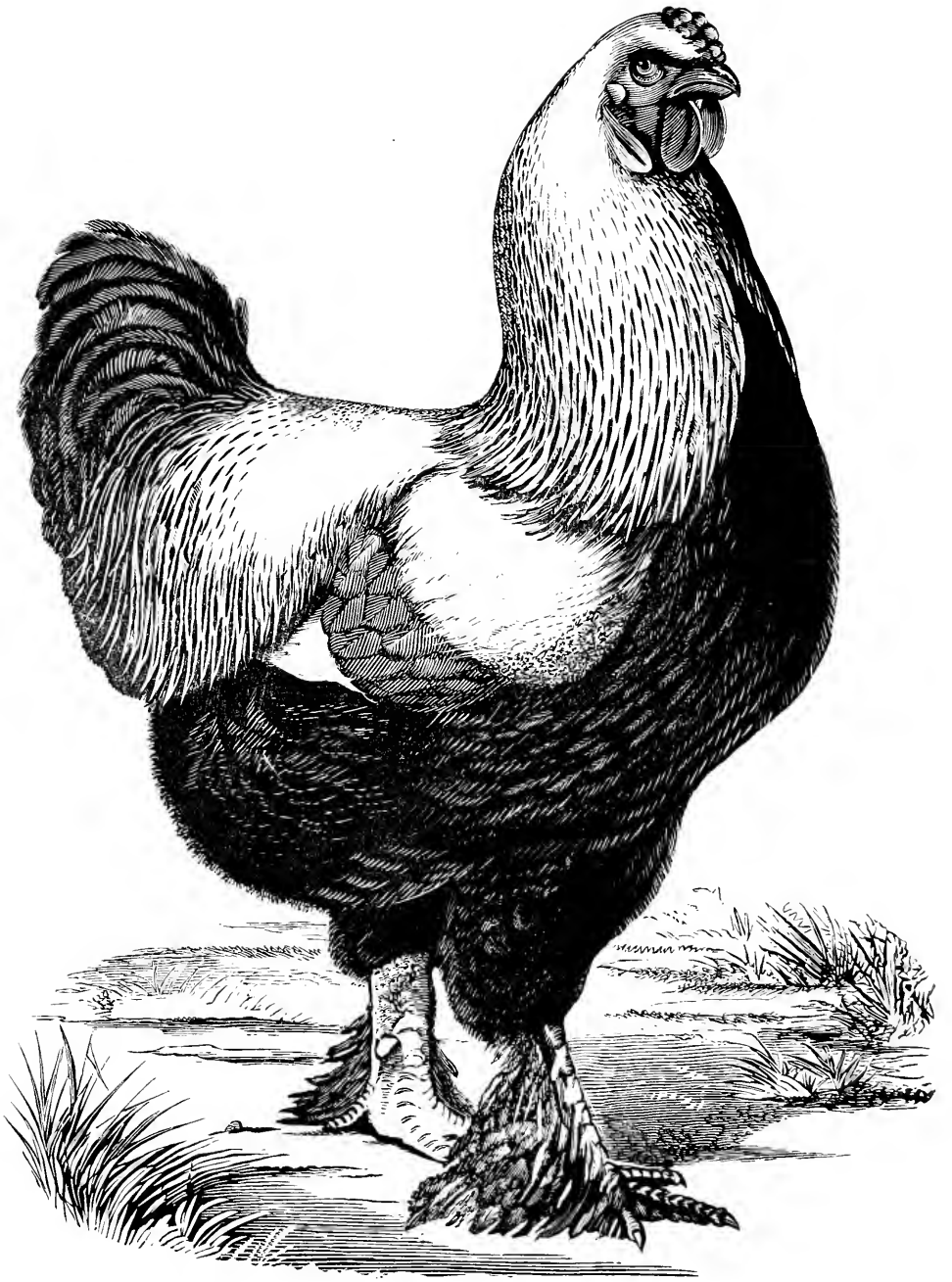
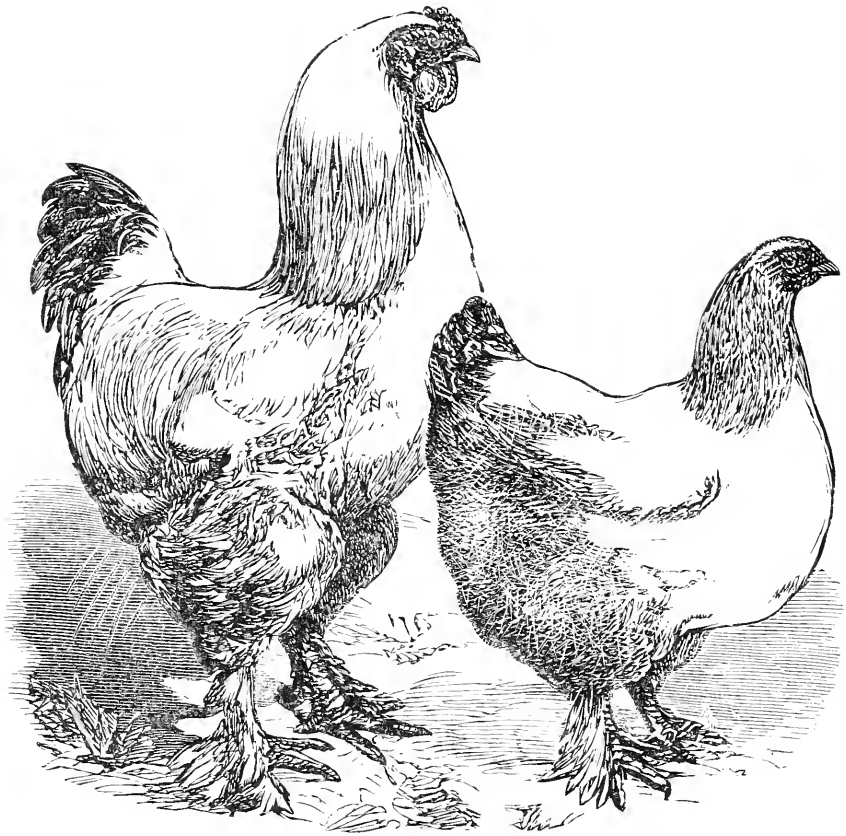
* In August, 1874, Miss Watts of London writes to Lewis Wright that, "early in 1853 she sent her first order for Light Brahmas to Dr. Bennett, and specified that the fowls must be *single*-combed." . . . "This was objected to (in America) on the score that the single comb was not right." So *pea*-comb birds were sent her. This lady says she bred the so-called Chamberlin-Bennett stock, but found "no *Dark* Brahmas until after 1862," when she crossed hers with birds from Dr. Gwynne's stock; and which Bennett sent to Dr. Gwynne from *my* yards, years before!



MODEL OF "STANDARD" DARK BRAHMA COCK, 2 YEARS OLD, 1874.

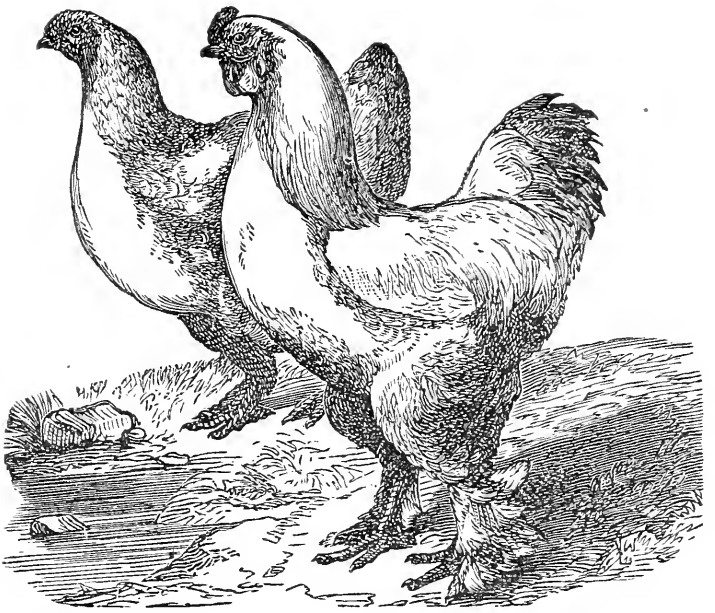
As bred by Philander Williams, G. P. Burnham, E. C. Comey, J. P. Buzzell, T. O. Wardwell, Jacob Graves, C. C. Loring, C. W. Chamberlin, etc., Mass.; J. Y. Bicknell, N. Y.; B. & J. Peters, Christana, Del.; C. G. Sanford, and H. A. Rhodes, R. I.; Dr. C. H. Kenegy, Polo, Ill.; and other leading American fanciers who know the difference between this and English "hocked" birds.



"UNCLE SAM" AND "CORA." CHAMBERLIN LIGHT BRAHMAS. (1853.)

The above is an English picture of an early pair of Light Brahmas belonging to Miss E. Watts — author of the London "Poultry Yard" — which she imported from Dr. J. C. Bennett, in 1853. In 1874, she writes that Mr. Plaisted and Dr. B. selected *all* this stock bred by her, up to 1862, when she obtained a pullet to cross with her own from Dr. Gwynne's importation from America: and adds that "about the same time" when she first received *hers* from America. "Mr. Baily, of Mount Street, London, received a pen of Dark Birds from Mr. Burnham, which were not exactly to her fancy, *on account of their heavy color;* but they were very fine."

In closing this article upon selection and mating the Brahmas, &c., for breeding, I ask the reader to compare the above drawing of Dr. Bennett's fowls of 1853 with the picture of my light Gray Shanghaes of 1852, on the opposite page. Both these engravings were drawn by the same European artist, *from life.* Is the difference (if there *be* any,) discoverable? *I* can not see it. Yet one pair are drawn from my "Gray Shanghaes" in 1852 '3, and the others are from Miss E. Watts' birds, sent her by Dr. Bennett and Plaisted, in 1853 '4.



PORTRAITS OF THE "LIGHT-GRAY SHANGHAES," *drawn in* 1852.

BURNHAM AGAINST WRIGHT.

"Life would be a perpetual flea-hunt, if a man were obliged to run down all the innuendoes, inveracities, insinuations, and suspicions which are uttered against him." — REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

"But for that blindness which is inseparable from malice, what powers of evil would it possess! Fortunately for mankind, its venom, — like that of the rattlesnake, — when most poisonous, clouds the eye of the reptile, and defeats its aim." — W. GILMORE SIMMS.

IN closing this volume, I am constrained, in view of certain demonstrations promulgated by Lewis Wright, of England, in a late expensive poultry book he has issued in London, to conclude my account of the "CHINA FOWL, *Shanghae, Cochin,* and '*Brahma,*'" with a brief personal protest against the rigmarole and pointless twaddle embodied in said Wright's recent attacks upon *me* in that work, and its smaller predecessor, wherein he has so wantonly assailed Mr. G. P. Burnham and his poultry-stock, by his utterly senseless and groundless attempt at argument in reference to the origin of the mythical Cornish-Chamberlin-Sailor-Hatch-Bennett-Brahmapootra "importation of fowls from Luckipoor, in India;" which silly tale, for twenty odd years *I* have known, and which every fancier in America has been confident

was, in its details, one of the grossest inventions at humbug that ever was perpetrated in the whole history of the hen fever.

The poultry press in this country and England have kindly permitted me to reply, through their columns, to this utterly baseless attack: and I would here express my grateful obligations to Wade's "Fanciers' Journal," Philadelphia; Stoddard's "Poultry World," Hartford; "The Pet-Stock Bulletin," New York; "The Country Gentleman," Albany; "The Turf, Field, and Farm," New York; "The Poultry Review," London; "The Poultry Record," Farmington, Ill.; "The North-Western Poultry Journal," Minneapolis, Wis.; "The Poultry Argus," Polo, Ill., and other American and English journals, for the favor they have accorded me, in enabling me to set myself "right on the record" in this affair, in reply to Lewis Wright's unfounded, unreasonable, and atrocious assault upon a man *who never had aught to do with the subject-matter he treats of* in his abusive works, except to ridicule this nonsense and chicanery, from first to last.

Mr. Wright commences upon a false foundation, starting out with the assumption, in the opening paragraph of his "Brahma Fowl" book, that the large Light-Gray Shanghaes, Light Brahmas,— or whatever they should rightfully be called,— were "originally imported from *India*." He then proceeds to *argue* the question towards establishing this fallacy, instead of either accepting or reciting well-known facts regarding the actual history of the origin of this fowl. He declares that "it appeared to him possible to throw some additional light" upon this long mooted subject, and "to point, with Mr. Darwin's aid, with certainty to a scientific and rational conclusion" as to whether these fowls came from India, or from Shanghae, in China.

When the record was so ample and so plain, at least in this country, and the existing accounts so simple, as they have been for more than twenty years, it does seem to the view of an American reader or fancier, who is reasonably posted in current poultry affairs, that this pretended "labor of love," on the part of the Englishman has been conducted in a most singularly hateful and stupid manner, from the outset; and that Lewis Wright has evinced a most remarkable lack of foresight in the crudities he has promulgated, as well as having repeated a string of old untruths; and the course he has in this instance pursued, has gained him no friends in the United States, verily! As to his affording the poultry world any reliable informa-

tion about Brahma fowl history, or seemingly gaining any real knowledge of the subject for himself, his late attempts have proved absolutely but most pitiable failures.

What is the use, for instance, of citing Mr. Darwin's phantasies to help prove an event that never had an existence? Either these fowls came from China, or India, or they didn't! Does the shape of the skull in two individual samples of foreign poultry, picked up in a man's yard and found to differ somewhat in their internal or external formation, prove what country the birds came from? Yet this — and these — are Wright's arguments to establish his theory that the Gray Shanghaes (or now so-called Brahmas), which originated in Mr. G. P. Burnham's yards in America, were "imported from the port of Luckipoor, India, into New York," on board a ship that never arrived there!

And through two huge volumes of this sort of argument — scientific, literary, historical, anatomical, botanical, ornithological, chemical, and unnatural, this pedantic poultry author at second-hand strings out the details of his "sailor-yarn," *ad nauseam*, in the attempt to establish what never occurred, and which was never really believed by half a dozen persons on this side of the Atlantic to have contained the first particle of truth or reason in or about it, from beginning to end. This whole fabricated tale was notoriously known here to have been a regularly concocted sham from the start.

I do not feel that I can do better than to make free use of the substance of the articles that have appeared, in one or other of the first-class journals named above, in thus defending myself, and in replying in these pages to Wright, who has been most egregiously *sold* by some one. That he has been deceived, through some source, is very clear: although he voluntarily enlarges upon whatever inimical information he may have gathered to enhance the venom of his spleen; and, with certain undeniable and patent facts before him (which he has utterly ignored, in his persistent tirade), he has proceded to misrepresent, malign, misinterpret, and interpolate my writings in the most disingenuous, unfair, and disgraceful manner, without one iota of provocation for his balderdash and slang, or reason for his miserable attack upon me and mine, in his two late books on poultry matters, and especially in connection with the origin and early history of the so-called "Brahma" fowls.

An officious anonymous correspondent of Wade's Fanciers' Journal (who, from the nature of his calling, could much better have employed his leisure in doing his Master's service than in thus meddling with a personal matter entirely outside of his province, which it was none of his business to interfere with), gratuitously forwarded to the editor a long abusive extract from one of Wrights' books, recently, wherein the author launched his assaults upon Mr. Burnham without stint; and which I was, for the first time, thus made conversant with, in their particularity. I replied to this attack, that Mr. Wright had picked *me* up without the slightest show of reason; and that, in his remarks about *my* connection with the "Brahmapootra" subject, he had entirely mistaken the position *I* had always maintained towards this notable humbug; inasmuch, as, from outset to conclusion, I had never, in any way, shape, or manner, been concerned in this deception, but, from the beginning, had steadily and consistently *fought* it, and *ridiculed* it — for more than twenty years! I then added, that Mr. Wright in his books did not touch the *main question* at issue in this controversy, strange to say — and that is, as to the time when, and the mode in which, this name "Brahmapootra" or "Brahma" came about, and my *aversion* to it.

Imprimis, you will observe, that *I* (Mr. Burnham) never laid any claim to this "Brahmapootra" misnomer. I did not make this name. I then called my fowls "Gray Shanghaes," — never by any other name, and simply for the good reason that Dr. Kerr, who sent me my *first* pair from Philadelphia, in September, 1849, in his letter, said: "Though they are called 'Chittagongs' (precisely as Mr. Cornish called his at first), the stock came to Pennsylvania from *Shanghae*, China." My second lot of Light Grays were procured in 1850, through Wm. T. Porter, Esq., editor of the "New York Spirit of the Times," from on board a ship at New York, direct from Shanghae, China. I then had other Chinese fowls of different colors, but these last were light gray. What else *could* I properly call them, but what I did; viz., "Gray Shanghaes." And here let me quote what Dr. Gwynne, of England, wrote in 1852: —

"I obtained of Dr. Bennett of the United States, five pairs of these birds. *Three* of these ten fowls only had compressed pea-combs; in *none* of the others was this found, nor could I recognize in them *any thing* but what could be found in the Shanghae birds. I had several communications from

Dr. Bennett, and in reply to all my inquiries, directed to learn the cause of naming as 'a new breed,' birds, *most* of which were essentially Shanghaes, in shape and character, I could gather no information but that the difference of *color* between these and other Shanghaes precluded their being thus classed; but I cannot accept *this* as adequate proof of 'Brahmapootras' being a 'new breed,' and therefore prefer the conclusion that they are *identical* with the Shanghaes, and only a new variety of that fowl. Another circumstance which confirms me in this view, as to the identity of these birds with the Shanghae breed, is the fact that the fowls recently presented to her Majesty, by Mr. Geo. P. Burnham, under the name of Gray Shanghaes, are admitted by Dr. Bennett to be *precisely similar to his own*, and Mr. Burnham assures me that the original stock from which the 'Gray Shanghaes,' presented to her Majesty were bred, was imported by himself, through Dr. Kerr, of Philadelphia, direct from Shanghae."

Did Mr. Lewis Wright find it convenient or useful to place this square, clear evidence about me and my fowls (written by Dr. Gwynne in 1852) in his poultry book? Not at all! Thus I continued to designate *my* fowls, long years after Dr. Bennett fixed "Brahmapootra" first, and then "Brahma" for his birds; though at that very time (1852) Dr. Bennett voluntarily wrote Dr. Gwynne, as above, which was the *true* statement; but which I do not find in Mr. Wright's account.

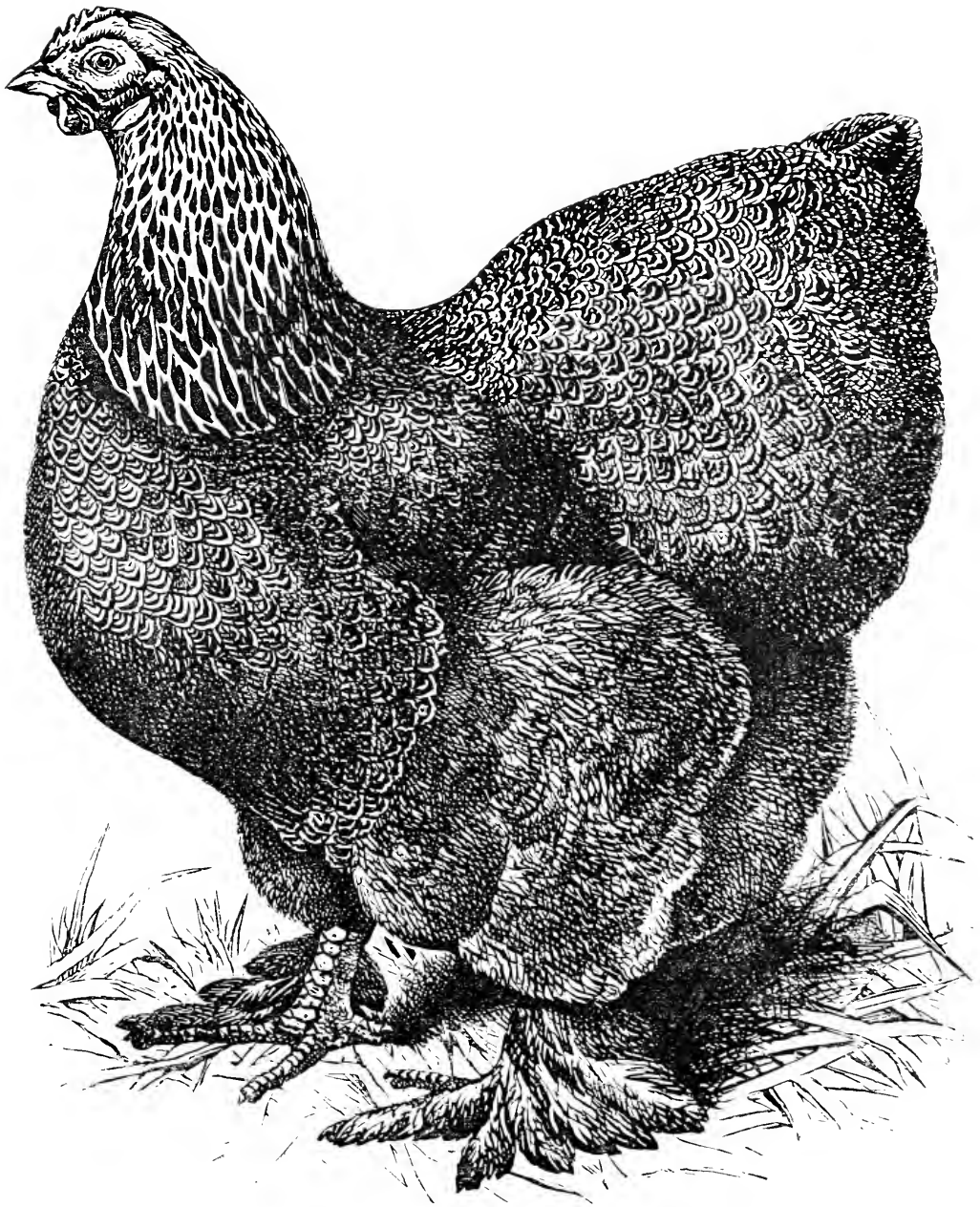
Observe *I* did not say this. Mr. Tegetmeier did not say so. This was Dr. J. C. Bennett's own account, published from him direct, in Rev. Mr. Wingfield's early editions of his "Illustrated Poultry Book;" see page 177, indorsed by Dr. Gwynne, himself. Yet, notwithstanding this patent *fact*, Mr. Lewis Wright goes out of his way, in the extract furnished, to assert that "Dr. Bennett got his stock from Connecticut"—meaning from Cornish, I presume. I do not know but he did. What I believe is, that it was all originally bred from my stock, though thus variously *named;* and Mr. Cornish himself (see his letter) called his fowls "Chittagongs" (not Brahmas) at first, because they so nearly resembled the large Gray fowls (mine) then bred in this country, so he says; and under which very name Dr. Kerr sent me my *first* ones from Philadelphia.

Now, who knew best, at that time, where Bennett's fowls came from? Dr. Bennett, or Mr. Wright? The former being the man who sent the fowls to England; who raised this question about *a name* for them; who

said, in 1852, that mine and his were *the same:* the latter in London, simply uttering an *ipse dixit*, based on the Cornish letter, which does not mention me or Dr. Bennett either. Now, herein lies the utter inconsistency of Mr. Wright's theory, to wit: He took for granted that what Mr. Cornish *meant* (not what he *said*) was that his fowls were "Brahmas." But this was not true. Neither Mr. Cornish, Mr. Chamberlin, nor "the sailor who reported he had found some light gray fowls" (see the Cornish letter) then said anything about these being "Brahmas." This name, at that time, had not been decided upon by anybody, and Mr. Wright cannot find it so used at all anywhere (in 1852) at the time when he undertakes to prove his false position by quoting Cornish's letter. This is very unfair, to say the least of it; but, whichever way it was, surely *I* had nothing whatever to do with all this. I neither suggested, made, approved, used, or adopted this name of "Brahmapootra" or Brahma for my fowls — never. Yet Mr. Wright distinctly asserts that "Mr. Cornish's statement was published long before Mr. Burnham's," and that "Burnham might have bred some very good *imitation* Brahmas," etc.; when it is so well known, and *always* has been, that I had never claimed, or asserted at any time, anywhere — in those years — that I ever imported, bought, bred, owned, or sold *any* fowls known as "Brahmapootras." Never, Mr. Wright! and you can not find it in the published records anywhere, prior to the late war — unless *you* have so written it.

I had then never had aught to do with naming the "Brahma" fowl. I always opposed this bald nonsense, and would never permit Dr. Bennett, Mr. Cornish, or Mr. Anybody to thus misname my fowls. Everybody in England and America knew this; though my name was, by *others*, sometimes mentioned in this connection. But, if Mr. Cornish, Dr. Bennett, or Mr. Wright; Dr. Gwynne, or Mr. Baily; Mr. Tegetmeier, or His Royal Highness Prince Albert, chose (as some did, I believe, after a while) to call my Gray Shanghaes "Brahmas," could I help it? I never called any of their fowls "Gray Shanghaes," surely!

How a sensible man, who writes so cleverly as Wright does, usually, could have wrought himself up to penning such a tirade as he thus has, is more than I can comprehend — since it is notorious that I opposed it in committees; in my writings; in conventions; in public and private; first, last, and always, — upon the ever-constant principle that *my* fowls were "Gray Shanghaes" from the start, and *not* "Brahmapootras."



PEA-COMBED PARTRIDGE COCHIN HEN, 3 YEARS OLD 1874.

From the original stock of C H. Edmonds, Melrose, Mass.

These had steadily been my assertions. Still, Mr. Wright kept calling me hard names, declaring that I "never had any genuine Brahmas" (who says I did ?), and that "Burnham might have bred some tolerable imitation Brahmas" (which I didn't). I had never even said I had *any* "Brahmas" whatever, genuine or imitation; that I ever *tried* to breed "Brahmas," or pretended I did; I had never even called my fowls "Brahmas," and never would. And I surely made no statement, oral or written, in which Mr. Cornish's fowls were involved, where I was a witness "more" or "less reliable," as Mr. Wright states; because his "Chittagongs" or "Brahmapootras," or whatever he named them, never interfered with my "Gray Shanghaes" any more than did Dr. Bennett's "Wild East-India Fawn-colored Dorkings," at this same period notable.

Mr. Wright lays great stress on the fact that "Burnham vainly tried to purchase this stock, but did not succeed." Admitted, again, that I did not. Thus, of course, Mr. Wright is a good witness that the fowls I had (presupposing that I ever had *any*) were not of this Cornish-Chamberlin, "Chittagong" or "Brahmapootra" strain. This settles one point clearly.

But I had *better* ones, and this it was that troubled my competitors, as thousands testified in favor of *my* birds, all over the world, in those years. I raised over sixteen hundred of the "Gray Shanghaes" in one year (1852 to 1853) in Melrose, and sent them all over Great Britain and the United States, to my generous patrons' entire satisfaction, but never once calling them by the detested name of Brahmapootras, about which Mr. Wright has raised such a silly fuss.

All this, be it remembered, I *now* state as applying in point of *time* to the period when Mr. Wright got out his books. Of course, in the *last* few years (since this "Brahma" name has been so universally in use), I have as often spoken of *them* as of my Gray Shanghaes, because everybody latterly thus designates this kind of poultry, for convenience. And in my "New Poultry Book," issued in 1871, I advertised and wrote about them as "Brahmas," because we had all accepted this latest popularly established name — both in England and America. But not *previously*, when Wright published his works. And I solemnly declare that I never was concerned in making or in sustaining this name of "Brahma" for fowls, and never claimed it for *my* stock, for I had no occasion to do so.

Now, the fowls lately coming from England to the United States, in the shape of "fresh importations" of "Cochins" or "Brahmas," are bred *there*, and very skilfully too. The Englishmen call these birds what they please, naturally. Our fanciers and poultry societies follow suit — though, in the Light Brahma class, we lead them still, as we have done from the outset. The later Dark Brahmas received here from England, are fine; but I have never heard of any fresh stock, *of this particular variety and color*, having been received by anybody in Great Britain, from *China*, or "from Luckipoor, in India," since the advent of *my* first Dark Brahmas (or Dark Gray Shanghaes) into England in 1853, as is stated at that period by Mr. W. B. Tegetmeier. And I know of no one who has ever set up any claim to have received from anybody, anywhere, previously, or *since* I sent those Dark Brahmas to London, in that year, any similar birds from any place *but* England; while we have yet to learn, with all Lewis Wright's platitudes, and his rigmarole about his "Indian officers' reports" of the existence of these Gray "Brahmas" formerly and still in that country, that there has ever, since 1853, been a single bird of this character brought thence into British ports!

Here is another patent *fact* for Mr. Wright's consideration. Does he allude to this important circumstance in either of his ponderous books? Not *he!* But I now point to this reality in earnest. If the Light and Dark "Brahmas" were, or are, so plenty out in India, with which country the Britons are known to be so constantly in communication, why have we or they not chanced to have had a fresh importation or two, or a dozen, within the past more than twenty years, from this paradise of the "Brahma" varieties? Or, why have not similarly-plumed birds found their way to either England or America from *China* — from Shanghae, Canton, Ning Po, or Hong-Kong, even — in all that long period? I rather think Mr. Lewis Wright will find this question a poser to answer satisfactorily, either to himself or to the breeders and admirers of these two varieties that originated in America, and were first owned, bred, and shown publicly in this country and in England, by George P. Burnham of Melrose, Mass., and "*not* in India."

I do not deny, and never will dispute the fact, that this stock has been at times improved by domestication and skilful breeding in both countries, since I originated these birds, of either variety, as a general thing. And yet I have never seen a finer lot of the *Light* variety than those I shipped to Her British

Majesty in 1852, from my yards; nor have I ever seen a better trio of the *Dark* strain than the three splendid birds I first shipped in 1853 to John Baily, of Mount Street, London; and I never expect to see these twelve fowls excelled for size, beauty, truthfulness in blood, markings, or general points. To-day, Mr. Baily advertises his Dark Brahmas as being "bred from stock descended from Mr. G. P. Burnham's original consignment to him." *If* the Light and Dark Brahmas are so readily to be had, and are so "common in India," why haven't some of the Wrights, the Gwynnes, the Watts, the Bailys, the Bakers, the Teebays, the Beldons, and a thousand other enterprising leading English breeders, obtained from "the port of Luckipoor, in India, in the valley of the Brahmapootra," where these superb fowls are said by Wright and his officious "India friend" to so abound (?) some samples of this celebrated race of poultry, with which to "freshen up" the Yankee stock or English strains that they have been breeding in-and-in so many years; but which, in the year 1874, is as fine as it was in 1851, '52, in every respect, and which so "marvellously holds out" in all its original proportions and characteristics, form, weight, size, and comeliness, notwithstanding the tens of thousands, aye! hundreds of thousands of birds that have been bred from my "original seven" and their progeny, on both sides of the Atlantic, during the last more than two decades of years?

Come, Mr. Lewis Wright! You know some things about poultry, though you really know precious little about the Brahma fowl-origin, evidently. We have in the United States, to-day, five hundred fanciers who can teach you the A, B, C, of this business; *malgré* all your profundity in a general way in the science of chickenology. Will you, for the benefit of the fancy in America and Great Britain, please give your views in response to these queries I have just herein suggested? I do not ask this upon my *own* account, because I know all about this "little joker," the "Brahmapootra." I am not a fool, if I am the deceiver you attempt, in your two books, to make me out. And I have studied this subject "in a reverent spirit," for the greater part of the last quarter of a century, assiduously. I know this Burampooter-Brahmapootra-Gray-Shanghae-*Brahma* subject through and through; although you facetiously express the opinion in your "monograph of the Brahma Fowl," page 46, that "to every breeder of this fowl, it will be evident that the amount of knowledge here hinted at is not very great,

and that nothing could better show Burnham's ignorance of *the fowl itself*, than his expression of opinion."

Ah, Lewis, you have a deal to learn upon this subject, yet! And I am sure it will not savor of boasting, when I affirm that I have long ago forgotten more than you can *ever* know about the wretched humbug of this Brahmapootraism; though I never was inveigled into, or implicated in it, individually, thank heaven! except to fight and satirize it. That part of the work I have faithfully attended to, first and last, for over twenty years, and I have not finished yet: since such men as you are, keep rising up, like Banquo's ghost, — whom I am compelled to "lay," — one after another; and this keeps me busy still in this direction.

You have shown yourself pretty clever at railing, Lewis, but your recent efforts, *in terrorem*, pointed at *me*, will not have the desired effect you evidently aimed at. You can not "rail the seal from off *my* bond" in this controversy, through your mulish contumacy and clumsy platitudes, while these two *facts* stand upon the record; viz., 1st. "Mr. Geo. P. Burnham exhibited in Boston the *first* Gray Shanghae fowls ever seen there; from which stock, bred in his yards, Dr. John C. Bennett produced the *first* so-called 'Light Brahmas' ever shown in the world; 2d. Mr. Geo. P. Burnham sent to England, early in 1853, the *first* trio of 'Dark Brahmas' ever seen there, or anywhere else, which latter (from the same original stock) went from Mr. Burnham's yards in Melrose, Mass., direct to Mr. John Baily, of London."

Thus much is certain — deny it, argue it, or dispute it, who will!

Nobody shows (upon the past *record*) any of this now so-called Brahma stock, of *either* Light or Dark varieties *prior* to those two showings. Since then, you can point to no one fresh "importation" by *anybody*, either in England or America, of a single Light or Dark Gray Shanghae, *or* "Brahma" fowl from India, China, or other Eastern country! There have been none *since*. There were none before. And I challenge you, or any man on earth to show that *this* "explicit statement" of mine is not true, to the letter.

I care not who has bred this stock *since* then. I am indifferent as to who has raised other Light Gray fowls since that period. It is immaterial to me what birds have been reared since the time when I *first* showed and sent those two varieties of "A NEW BREED of poultry" all over the world. And it is of the very least importance *how* this may have been effected after me.

I furnished the stock of the two original strains of now so-called LIGHT *and* DARK *Brahmas* — though I called it by its rightful *name* at, and from, the outset; while Dr. Bennett (*first*) then Cornish, with a hundred others, and, lastly, Lewis Wright, chose to nick-name these fine birds by another title. This *I* could not control. But the facts remain, and the fowls are to-day *unchanged* — save that, in the main, they have been somewhat improved upon by long domestication and careful breeding, in the hands of skilful fanciers on both sides of the Atlantic. When you can show us that these assertions are incorrect, and when you are able to satisfactorily answer the queries I have herein propounded — it will be quite time, Mr. Wright, to talk of and *argue* the points referring to the assumed pre-history of the Cornish-Chamberlin-Bennett-Hatch-Knox-"imported-from-India"-Brahmapootra strains.

Perhaps you *do* know sufficient about this business to reply to the questions I have proposed. Will you then please tell us, also, why it is that the two Cornish assertions (which statements you inform me by letter dated London, May 23, 1874, are the basis of your opinions and theory), about the arrival of his fowls "in the ships at New York from India in 1849," and twenty years afterwards that "they arrived from Luckipoor, in India, in September, 1846," are considered by you to be "accurate and conclusive evidence" that Burnham is a deceiver and a swindler, and that "his stock is spurious," when said Burnham, his fowls nor his existence is once referred to, nor hinted at, in those two letters? And will you be kind enough, at the same time (though I would not occasion you too much trouble at once), to inform us ignorant and illiterate people on this side of the Atlantic, why those India ships, arriving at New York, with the Cornish-Chamberlin gray fowls in 1849 *first*, and in 1846 *afterwards*, never made any "port entry" at the Custom-house in New York, of "ship, or captain," as our United States revenue laws imperatively require? Were fowls, ship, captain, sailor, obscure owner — all *smuggled* into New York? And is this the reason why everybody so conveniently forgot the date and the reticent parties who had to do with this "little job"? It may be so; but I think this hardly possible. Still, *this* hypothesis is a far more reasonable one than are the published conclusions upon *your* premises, which you so triumphantly indulge in at my expense, in view of the actual *facts* existing in this important point in the case, as I have fairly presented them.

The limits of this volume will not afford me space to *argue* this question, were I inclined to do so, which I am not. And I simply present these interrogatories as pertinent, in my judgment, to the issue involved. If Mr. Wright *can* answer these plain queries, we shall certainly thus learn what we do not at present know in America; and I have always believed that we knew all that anybody did upon this "Brahma-origin" topic. His reasoning and sophistry are of no mortal account. His pedantic display in tautological and technical particularities, as to the formation of the skulls of the now so-called "Brahmas," and the now so-called "Cochins," in comparison, carries no more weight with it than would the utterance of so much Sanscrit in the estimation of ordinary fowl-breeders; who, nevertheless, appreciate all this "moonshine" at its true value.

And so I shall not here attempt to answer his "points," *seriatim*, in kind; since I am only desirous to place the naked *facts* before my readers, in as plain a dress as my humble capacity to make myself understood will permit, leaving it to their common intelligence to decide, after examining said facts, whether Wright is wrong, or Burnham is right — or otherwise, — in this already greatly over-discussed matter. I have stated that Wright has interpolated and misquoted me and others in his books, to my personal disadvantage, most maliciously. Below, I give an example (out of dozens that I might quote, had I room in this book), where Mr. Wright indulges in this sort of contemptible wrong and distortion towards me. In the English "Cottage Gardener," 1853, appears this sentence, which I extract to the letter: —

(*The original paragraph.*)

"Mr. P. Jones states the fact of a pair of Gray chickens he bought" (of *whom?*) "breeding 'silver cinnamon' offspring; whilst the *pure* unmixed stock of Dr. Gwynne, who had his direct from Dr. Bennett, and a Mr. Sheenan and others," (not Burnham!) "invariably bred pure gray." And again, same paper, "while what have been considered as the purest strain of the Brahma Poutras have thrown pure chickens *only*, we know, on good authority, that the produce of imported birds of equally high pretensions have produced *Buff* chickens with black hackles."

And here is the manner (italics and all) in which Lewis Wright cooks up this paragragh, when *he* pretends to make this extract for his "Poultry Book," see page 241, to aid him to "confound Burnham" with!

(*The quotation as printed by Wright.*)

"Mr. P. Jones, in the Cottage Gardener, tells of a pair of gray chickens he bought breeding *silver cinnamon* offspring, — a sure sign of crossing, — while the pure unmixed stock, obtained direct from Dr. Bennett, who had his from Mr. Cornish, 'invariably bred pure gray.' In the same year the editor himself writes, that 'while what have been considered the purest strain of Brahma Poutras have thrown *pure chickens only*, we know on good authority that the produce of *imported birds of equally high pretensions* (Burnham's) have produced Buff chickens with black hackles.'"

Is this — with its italics, alterations, and additions — penned by Wright in a Christian temper? Is this "conducting the poultry fancy in a reverent spirit?" Is this "striving in the fear of God to do *good* to the community, of which we form a part?" as Lewis Wright, in the preface to this very "Brahma Fowl" book (first editions) cantingly claims we should do? . . . This entire perversion of the sense and text of the *original* paragraph, thus garbled by Wright, — which in no one word refers to me or my fowls, any more than do the two Cornish letters he similarly garbles, — I simply pronounce utterly false, as well as infamous. And Wright *knew* he was uttering this falsity, and perpetrating this infamy, when he thus inserted my name in parenthesis in, and changed the phrasing of, that paragraph, thus ignobly, gratuitously, and designedly — as he has similarly done in other places.

This is but a single instance of Wright's folly and contumely towards me; and, as to the paragraph just quoted from the "Cottage Gardener," — *I* never knew, or heard of the instance, in my whole five-and-twenty year's experience with *my* Gray stock, where a "buff chicken" appeared among their progeny, — in my own yards, nor in the hands of any other person who bred my gray fowls clean, — either in America or England; and I do not believe the case ever occurred. They did breed all shades of Light and Dark *gray* birds; but *never* a buff one, within my knowledge, from 1849 to 1874, inclusive. While, on the other hand, in reference to the Cornish-Bennett strain, prated about by Wright in this altered quotation he makes, I find in June, 1874, in the "Poultry World," written by Mr. Plaisted (Dr. Bennett's business partner in the chicken trade in 1853 and '54), these remarkably candid words upon this very subject: —

"Dr. Bennett removed to Iowa, in March, 1853" (from New Hampshire). "He was unable to endure the western climate, and made me a proposition

to go into company in the poultry-stock business" (at Great Falls, N. H.), "which I accepted. He returned in October, 1853, and this plan was carried out to the letter." . . . "I selected every Brahma that Dr. Bennett or Bennett & Plaisted ever shipped to England, excepting the pair (*he* first) sent to Dr. Gwynne." . . . "*All* these Brahmas, shipped to England, were bred either by Dr. Bennett, S. O. Hatch, George Smith, or myself, excepting the pair sent to Dr. Gwynne. I know this for a certainty, and *these are the fowls which Mr. L. Wright has described as Dr. Bennett's* "PURE *Brahmas.*" In breeding *these*, many different shades of color were produced, the most objectionable being pure *buff*, with the exception of *a pencilled neck, as fine a color as we see to-day among the Buff Cochins.*" . . . "Deeming it best to keep these *out* of the stock as much as possible, I selected those with fine *pencilled necks*, black tails, &c." . . . "I had more fear of the *buff* showing itself *from the stock sent to England by us*, than of any thing else. It was reasonable to suppose that, *if they bred all colors* the first year or two, the English fanciers would reject them, and consider that we had been playing a 'Yankee trick.' Whatever may be said of the early history of these 'Brahmas,' it is an indisputable fact, that *buffs* were found in *all* the yards where *they* were bred, as well as the shades of color before mentioned." . . . "Mr. Wright thinks those sent to England by Mr. George P. Burnham were mongrels. These I know nothing about. He (Wright) gives as his reason, that *they bred buff;* yet they might have been as pure as any of the others sent, and *still* breed buff progeny."

This from Mr. C. C. Plaisted, in 1874, who claims that he is writing a fresh history for the "World," of the Cornish-Chamberlin-Bennett-Hatch "*pure* Brahmapootras," and who "knows nothing about" the gray fowls Mr. G. P. Burnham sent to England, which *Wright* falsely says "produced buff chickens with black hackles." It is pretty clear from *this* account, so frankly given by Mr. Plaisted, and so *accurately* (as I know it to be), that the buff-chicken breeding from the Grays, in England, *occurred with this very Cornish-Bennett stock* that Wright so lauds (at my expense)! And, since I can affirm that I never sold a gray fowl in England to "Mr. P. Jones," to the "editor of the Cottage Gardener," or to "a Mr. Sheenan," in my life, and never knew or heard of a case where my Gray Shanghaes ever *once* threw a buff chicken, anywhere, in all my experience, I declare this to be another coined falsity of Wright, made up out of whole cloth, to serve the dastardly purpose he had in view in thus interpolating and altering this quotation he makes (upon this particular point) in his two densely muddled "historical" chicken books.

After the foregoing pages were printed, Mr. Wright in his August Gazette renewed his attack upon me. Instead of noting my answer to his original assaults, he turns to the "Hen Fever" to sustain his falsities; and starts anew with his old crudities, in a promise "to do Mr. Burnham justice." He says —

"I state (on page 240 of my "Book of Poultry,") that, in the *Hen Fever*, Burnham affirms that Light and Dark Brahmas had *distinct origins*, but that he — modest man! — had made them *both;* the Light by breeding from some pure, uncrossed Grey Cochins, the Dark by crossing Cochins with Grey Chittagongs . . . . Late in 1852 he sent over a consignment of *so-called Light Brahmas* to Her Majesty the Queen, and in the following year a number of *Dark birds* to various breeders. And again on page 244, I observe: When Burnham said that the *Dark Brahmas* were formed by a cross between Grey Chittagongs and Cochins, he meant, &c., &c."

In what I did write, I "meant" precisely what I *said* — and *not* what Lewis Wright falsely "quotes," or affirms that I said. I have already, in these pages, insisted that I never made the above statements, and that I never "sent over any *so-called Light Brahmas* to Her Majesty." I sent the Queen a cage of my "GRAY SHANGHAES," only. *Then* "so called" by me, *always* so called by me, accepted by Her Majesty *as* "Gray Shanghaes" — and nothing else.

I now repeat that the sentences Wright pretends thus to quote from my early book, do *not* appear there. The term "*Dark* Brahmas" is not once used in the entire 325 pages of my "Hen Fever!" Nor is the sentence that I "made the *Light* Brahmas by breeding from pure, uncrossed Grey Cochins," in that volume — anywhere. Again — the lines "Burnham said that the *Dark Brahmas* were formed by a cross between Grey Chittagongs and Cochins," are Wright's words — not mine. I never said so, or penned this paragraph.

I *now* say that neither the *Dark* "Brahmas" or the *Dark* "Grey Shanghaes" are alluded to, in the Hen Fever. But, in order to back up his first falsities, Wright fabricated this stuff, in his "Book of Poultry," and adheres to it, yet!

In the name of all that is righteous or decent, is *this* sort of "argument" fair dealing towards me, on the part of Lewis Wright? On pages 150 and 151 I expose other altered and interpolated quotations made by Wright — in a similar vein, with a similar sinister purpose. Still, in his London paper of August 22d, '74, he reproduces *a part* of Cornish's first 1852 letter, (adroitly *leaving out* the sentence he prints from that document in his "Brahma Fowl" in 1870, which declares that "Chamberlin got his Gray fowls in 1849!!") and *the whole* of the second 1869 letter, wherein Cornish says he "got them in 1846" — to re-bolster his previous blunders coupled with Cornish's two accounts; which last mentioned article he concludes with this remarkable passage: "I promise that my next accounts from Mr. Burnham will *not* be heavy reading . . . and I 'fudge,' this week, by simply giving that of Mr. Cornish."

This word *fudge*, used by Wright, I did not at first appreceiate. Upon consulting Webster, however, I find the definition of this ungraceful term to be as follows: "FUDGE — *v. t. To devise; to contrive; to fabricate; to foist; to interpolate.*" In his London Gazette, page 337, Wright says — "I *fudge*, this week, by simply giving the accounts of Mr. Cornish." To which *I* add, (notwithstanding Wright's frank confession of his offense, in *this* instance,) that he has been constantly "fudging," from the outset! Yet it is refreshing to see him *admit* that he has devised, contrived, fabricated, foisted, and interpolated.

And here I will note the fact that the "Poultry World" for September contains a portrait of Mr. Chas. Knox, in 1847, "a clerk on a Hartford and New York propeller" — whom Mr. Plaisted argues is "the sailor" we have heard so much of, in connection with the Cornish-Chamberlin-Brahma-pootras. A pleasant but indefinite letter is given from Mr. Knox, who says "In 1847 I went on board a ship at New York, to look at two pairs of remarkable poultry, which were to be exhibited at Franklin Market" — and "next trip (after reporting to Mr. Chamberlin) I went and bought the gray pair, and took them to Hartford." He, too, states that *he* "never knew what port this vessel came from, nor her name;" and "this is *all* he can remember of the transaction."

I only say to this that I never before heard of Mr. Knox, who it appears was no "sailor," but a clerk on a propeller in 1847; now a highly respectable gentleman in Ohio — "a man of honor and alike of wealth." I have no doubt he "saw" and "bought a gray pair of fowls," as he avers. *I* have done this same thing, often. But I cannot conceive what this gentleman's seeing, buying, or writing about "this transaction in 1847" has to do with *me*, or *mine* — since he makes no reference to Mr. Burnham or his poultry, in this account. And surely it can have no bearing upon "accurate" *Mr. Cornish's* two stories about "Brahma-pootras." Yet this *new* theory is as plausible as Wright's old one; though, as I have said before, it is rather late in the day to cook this tale up, and apply it as "history," thus *ex post-facto*.

However, I know nothing about Mr. Knox, or this 1847 pair of gray fowls. I never saw them, or heard of them before. My affair is with Lewis Wright, and his stupid Cornish-yarns of 1849 and 1846. In giving this letter from Mr. Knox, dated "*Toledo, O.*, July 22d, 1874," Mr. C. C. Plaisted exultingly enquires, with King John, "*Have I not here the best cards for the game?*" In answer to which I reply, "I think not — since you have 'shewn your hand;' and it does not look to me like a winning one. You have 'called' too soon, friend P!"

It is generally known among poultry fanciers in America, that Mr. Virgil Cornish of Connecticut has written the two letters which have been published, referring to "a pair of large light-gray fowls" which a Mr. Chamberlin is said to have become possessed of, mysteriously, in the early years of the poultry mania. These two letters (nearly twenty years apart in their dates) are reprinted in both of Lewis Wright's latest books; and upon these two different accounts by Cornish, Mr. Wright tells us he bases his singular theory of the "*origin* of the Brahma fowls."

In one of these published letters, — the first, dated March, 1852, — Cornish says, his fowls "came to New York in the India ship," and thence "into Connecticut, in 1849;" and "it is certain they never were bred until they reached this [his] town." In the other letter, Cornish says, just as "definitely and accurately" (which second letter is dated November 9, 1869), "the ship arrived with my fowls at New York in September, 1846! I bought the *first* brood hatched out, and, in April following, *the old pair!*"

Now, what is there "explicit" or "accurate" in these two distinctly different statements of Cornish, that he *first* got his pair of fowls from the sailors of the *India* ships at New York in 1849," that "it is certain they never were bred till they reached Connecticut," and his "town, in *that* year;" then (in 1869) stating that they "arrived at New York in a ship from Luckipoor, in India, September, 1846," and he "got the first brood hatched in 1847," etc.?

Mr. Lewis Wright's capacity for understanding very plain language must be most indifferent, indeed, if he cannot see the inconsistent character of these two accounts! But, in addition to this, — not by one syllable, in *either* of these letters which he quotes from Cornish, does that gentleman *allude* to me, in the remotest way. Why, then, should Wright drag *me* into this mess?

Mr. Cornish and Mr. Burnham never once, in those years (before Wright wrote his books), or since, *ever* had any dispute or "conflict." And is it not clear, upon a moment's examination, in view of the above two antagonistic accounts, that both Mr. Wright's false theory and Cornish's repeated misstatements alike "go up in a balloon?"

In Wright, page 17, we have it thus: Cornish says that "Chamberlin brought his fowls into Connecticut in the early part of 1849." Mr. Cornish says, in the same letter, "I got my stock from Chamberlin, direct." Then he says (in 1869), the ship with these fowls on board arrived in 1846! Most of the first brood came out in May, 1847, which I purchased in August, and

the old pair in April following." Thus, though he asserts clearly, in March 2, 1852, that Chamberlin did not "bring his fowls into the State until 1849," he "purchased *of* Chamberlin the most of the first brood in August, 1847, and *the old pair* in April, 1848!" And, in that same first letter (see Wright, page 16, and Miss Watts' Poultry Yard, page 62, printed in italics), Cornish says, "*it is certain they never were bred till they reached his town, in* 1849!"

Now, I will shortly present the recent evidence of a Connecticut Light-Brahma writer and breeder, in reference to Cornish's two statements, who positively asserts that "there is *nothing* accurate in the first one; that the last one is still *worse;* that Cornish did *not* purchase Chamberlin's first brood; and that he never owned any 'old pair' of Grays, at *any* time!" Which assertions will be backed by three witnesses, now alive, at Hartford.

Yet Lewis Wright repeatedly insists, in his two works, that "Mr. *Cornish's* accounts are the only reliable ones published;" that "*Cornish* tells the story of the Brahma origin accurately and clearly;" that Virgil Cornish's statements "are explicit and indisputable;" that "no one can question Mr. Cornish's accuracy;" and that, for all the details of his stupid and utterly fallacious theory, he (Wright) relies upon "the unimpeachable, succinct, consistent, truthful, clearly-narrated statements made and repeated by Virgil Cornish!"

However, I must not omit just here to repeat that in neither of the above accounts of Mr. Cornish — whether they be false or true — does that gentleman once refer to *me,* or to my fowls, in the remotest way. And I will add that I should not now have spoken of Mr. Cornish but that Wright goes so far out of his way in the endeavor to sustain his nonsensical theory in his two books as to drag Mr. Cornish and myself before the public, antagonistically; when the exact truth in this matter is, that Mr. Cornish and Mr. Burnham never had a word of difference, written or verbal, until Wright thus pitted them against each other, for his own inexplicable purposes.* And here I call especial attention to the pertinent extracts on pages 158 to 161.

* Since these present pages were written, — notwithstanding the fact that Mr. Burnham had previously, through the poultry journals and by private letters, communicated the true state of the case to Mr. Wright, in full, — this gratuitous maligner in the papers assumes new grounds of assault, and persists in the bigoted determination to sustain his originally-invented nonsense. But, avoiding the issues he had already made, he starts afresh upon entirely untenable grounds, and with a totally different line of argument, to prove what "Burnham did," and "Burnham didn't," in the years ago. To which latest rodomontade, by Wright, entirely in the old vein, I will simply here apply the trite but truthful apothegm, — "false in *one*, false in *all*." — G. P. B.

We shall find that the so-stated "importation from *India*" of the Cornish-sailor gray fowls has *no* foundation in fact; and though the young birds, shown at the early exhibitions in Boston, were very good specimens, there can be no doubt (as there exists no evidence to the *contrary*) that *all* the Light-Gray samples exhibited in 1850, '51, '52, — as the Committees of Judges at Boston declare officially, — came out of the same original stock, and that this "large pair of gray fowls," *said* by the sailor to have been "found" by him in New York, or elsewhere, were hatched from eggs sent previously from *my* yards, or were sold by me to some unknown party, as chickens; which chanced to develop into a fine pair of birds in the hands of the person who thus obtained them. Or, they might have come from Pennsylvania, as mine did in the first instance — from Dr. Kerr.

As to the *first* letter signed by Virgil Cornish, dated March 2, 1852, I will add here that I am ready to take oath that Dr. John C. Bennett came to my house and passed the night there, a few months *previously* to the date of that document, when he exhibited to me and to members of my family *his* ready prepared account of what was "shortly to be forthcoming as the true history of the origin and importation of the Brahmapootra fowls, from India," which precious document (as nearly as I can now recollect it), in his handwriting, was almost word for word *this very letter*, published in 1852 as Mr. Cornish's! During the Doctor's visit to me that day and night, at Melrose, he informed me that this very statement was *to be* published, and that it would be approved by Mr. Cornish and Mr. Hatch of Connecticut. He then took up a proof I had of the illustration of his original three "Brahmapootra" fowls, the *first* ever shown in the world, which may be seen on page 20 of this volume (which block was engraved twenty-four years ago, and which wood-cut I have the original of now in my possession), and upon the margin of said *proof* he wrote these words: "*Remove streamers, make the two pullets larger, no feathers on legs;*" which directions were addressed by Dr. Bennett to the artist who made the drawing, for the purpose of republishing this cut to suit his ideas, *then*, of the "Brahmapootras" he wished to delineate. The above memoranda, in Bennett's own hand-writing upon that proof, I have still in my hands. The "streamers," as the Doctor called them, referred to the slight top-knots which appear (see engraving) at the back of the heads of all three of these original "Brahmapooters."

PRO AND CON.

Extracts from Wright's Two Poultry Books.

"The Brahma Fowl was unquestionably first introduced into England as late as the year **1852**, when two pens were shown at Birmingham by Mrs. Hozier Williams and Dr. Gwynne. It was said this fowl was a new breed, imported from *India*."— *Wright's "Brahma Fowl."*

"Mr. Burnham, of the United States, who, it will be remembered, sent over some of the *earliest* so-called 'Brahmas' as a present to Her Majesty, in **1852**, affirms that *he originated them*."— *From the "Brahma Fowl" by Lewis Wright.*

"The *first* exhibition of light Brahma *chickens* took place in Boston, *in October*, **1850**, and were those of Dr. J. C. Bennett. This pen was considered magnificent; and Dr. Bennett's own statement was that he purchased them previously at a very high figure from Mr. V. Cornish, of Conn."— *"Brahma Fowl" again.*

"Mr. Chamberlin, of Connecticut, sent a sailor to New York, who reported that he found a pair of Light-Gray fowls, which he purchased. The man in New York, whose name we have not got, gave *no* account of their origin, except that they came over in the *India* ships." "These were said to be originally imported from *India*."— *"Brahma Fowl," pp. 9 and 16.*

"Dr. Bennett stated (in **1850**) that he purchased his first fowls of Mr. Cornish; and a portion of Mr. Cornish's account, not quoted in his first published letter (about these fowls), states that 'Chamberlin (of whom Cornish got his chickens) brought his fowls into Connecticut *in the early part of* **1849**.'" . . . "I give below all the facts (Nov. 9, 1869,) relating to the early history of the Brahmapootra fowls. . . . Mr. Chamberlin's name was Nelson H. The ship arrived in New York in September, **1846**. The name of the port from which the ship sailed was Luckipoor, in *India*. 'I bought the first brood hatched out, in August, and the old pair in April following.' The Brahmas were first exhibited in Boston as 'Gray Chittagongs,' in **1850**. The *name* was then established." This is Mr. Cornish's statement, and is "the only account consistent with the facts and itself, which is seen to be corroborated in every possible way."— *Wright's "Origin of the Brahma," pp. 17, 140, and 143.*

"So far as positive *evidence* is concerned, it must be considered decisively the fact that Burnham's account is a deception, while Mr. Cornish's is correct; and that *all* the genuine 'Brahmas' were bred from the original pair first brought into Connecticut by Mr. Chamberlin!" (*When?* in **1849**? in **1846**? or in **1847**?)— *Wright's "Brahma Fowl," pp. 20, 21.*

Extracts from other Poultry Authorities.

"The clearness of the white, and the well-defined markings of the two contributions shown at Birmingham, attracted attention. A few weeks after, some of these birds, sent over on speculation by Dr. J. C. Bennett, were shown in Baker Street."— *Miss Watts' London "Poultry Yard."*

"I never sent over to Her Majesty *any* so-called 'Brahmas,' early or late. I never *said* I did. I never pretended I did; and no one, save Lewis Wright, has ever said, or pretended, I did!"— *G. P. Burnham, in all the Poultry journals.*

"The Brahmas were *first* exhibited in Boston by Mr. Hatch, of Connecticut, as 'Gray Chittagongs,' in **1850**. I *declined* exhibiting, then. I preferred to test them further. I sold *no* birds to any one until *December*, **1850**. I sold them at first at $12 per pair."— *Virgil Cornish, Connecticut, in letter dated Nov. 9, 1869.*

"There is not a particle of evidence to show that these fowls came from *India!* The banks of the Brahmapootra River have long been in possession of the British, and *no such fowls were ever seen in that locality.* In fact, the Brahmas originated *not* in India, but in America"— [They were first brought to public notice by Mr. Burnham.]— "the two varieties."— *Tegetmeier's Poultry Book, p. 55.*

"Mr. Cornish being the first who has seen fit to publish a 'history,' of the Brahmas, and having therein made statements not easily proven, I shall take the liberty of criticising his account. I am unable to gather from those who first owned them in this country, positive evidence concerning their nativity. Some have asserted that they were originally from Chittagong; others name the Burrampooter Valley, India, as their natural home; and Mr. Cornish, in a *later* account, says they came from a port called 'Luckipoor,' up the Burrampooter River; *none* of which statements are proven to be authentic. If Mr. Cornish had stated that they were a 'lucky hit,' I should have agreed with him. Mr. Cornish relates that Mr. Hatch, of Hamden, Conn., exhibited Brahmas in **1850**, in Boston. Mr. Hatch resided in Franklin at that time, and the date of his first exhibition was in **1851** (not **1850**). Mr. Cornish, in all his statements to Mr. Wright, *goes back one year earlier than he ought to.*"— *C. C. Plaisted, in* 1874.

"The *first* pair of these fowls, about which there has been so much discussion, were brought by one Charles Knox to Mr. Nelson H. Chamberlin, in Hartford, Conn., in **1847**. They were *first bred* by Mr. Chamberlin in **1848**. Mr. Knox reported them just arrived on an East India vessel, at New York."— *C. C. Plaisted's (Bennett's partner) account, in* 1874.

"It appears, both from the statements of private correspondence and from the various papers of the period, that the *first* public exhibition of Light Brahmas took place in Boston, in **1850.** They were *chickens*, and were shown by Dr. Bennett, of Great Falls, N.H."—"*Brahma Fowl*," *p.* 17.

"This pen (shown by Dr. Bennett, in October, **1850,**) was considered magnificent *in every way*, and was the principal attraction of the show. The question at once occurred, from whom did Dr. Bennett procure these birds? And it is impossible to doubt *his own statement*, made in answer to every inquiry, that 'he purchased them from Mr. Cornish, of Connecticut.'"—*Wright's* "*Origin of Brahma*," *p.* 17.

"Mr. P. Jones states the fact in 'The Cottage Gardener,' of a pair of Gray chickens he bought, breeding *silver cinnamon* offspring, a sure sign of crossing; while the pure unmixed stock, obtained from Dr. Bennett, who had his from Mr. Cornish, invariably bred pure gray." . . . "While this purest strain of Brahmas have thrown pure chickens *only*, we know that the produce of imported birds of equally high pretensions (Burnham's) have produced *Buff* chickens."—*Lewis Wright's altered quotation, page* 241, "*Illustrated Book of Poultry.*"

"All the facts strongly corroborate Mr. Cornish's account, proving that *Connecticut* was the headquarters of this breed, and that from the very *first* it bred with extreme purity as regards *all* the characteristics." . . . "Mr. Burnham visited this New-England show in 1850, and endeavored to purchase some of this 'Brahma' stock, but failed."—*Wright's* "*Brahma Fowl*," *p.* 18.

"We have thus two very definite statements by Mr. Burnham: first, that *he was the founder*, or original breeder of 'Brahmas;' and secondly, that the Light variety were pure, uncrossed Gray Cochins."—*Wright's* "*Origin of the Brahma Fowl*," *in* 1870, *p.* 12.

"All Mr. Burnham's early Brahmas were single-combed, while the originals (Cornish's) were all triple, or 'pea-combed.' The pea-comb *alone* is almost conclusive evidence of the superior antiquity or *purity* of the Brahma fowl."—*Wright's* "*Illustrated Poultry Book*," *p.* 247.

"The comb known as the 'pea-comb,' is peculiar. No *pure* strain ought to breed a solitary comb in which this peculiar triple character is not *perfectly* distinct. I would not press a fancy point too far; but, considering how typical the pea-comb *is*, I would not breed from an imperfect one, &c."—*Wright's* "*Poultry Book*," *p.* 249, *and last London edition of* "*Brahma Fowl.*"

"Mr. Jos. Hinton commenced with the pure *Light* Cornish-Chamberlin stock; and in three years' breeding he *transformed his strain* from Light to Dark; producing, from these Light Chamberlin

"Mr. S. O. Hatch, of Connecticut, *first* exhibited these fowls *in November*, **1851.** An erroneous statement has been made in nearly all the leading poultry books and papers, that the Light Brahmas were first shown at the exhibition in Boston, in **1850.**"—*C. C. Plaisted, in* 1874.

"This is the trio Mr. Wright has mentioned as 'the *first* pure-bred Brahmas exhibited at Boston.' They were a cross, and *not of the Chamberlin stock.* They were light gray; had top-knots, and attracted much attention. But this was in **1851**, November. At this show (1851) Mr. Hatch gave us the *first* sight at pure-bred Chamberlin Brahmas."—*C. C. Plaisted, in the Hartford* "*Poultry World*," 1874.

"My friend, Dr. Bennett, consulted me as to *a name* for a brace of *Gray* fowls I saw in his yard, in **1851.** He entered these at our Boston show that year, as 'Bramapootras.' These fowls were bred by him from my first (Dr. Kerr) Gray Shanghae cock, which I sold the doctor, and a Light-Drab (or *silver cinnamon*) Shanghae hen, in Massachusetts. Subsequently these fowls came to be called 'Burram Pootras,' 'Brahmapootras,' and finally *Brahmas.*"—*Burnham's* "*New Poultry Book*," 1870, *p.* 159, *quoted from another work in* 1855.

"The Light Brahmas undoubtedly originated in, and were identical with, those Gray fowls (Burnham's) that from the very first came over from *Shanghae*, with the Buff and Partridge birds now universally known as 'Cochins,' and here we append Mr. Burnham's account of them, from his amusing "History of the Hen Fever."—*Tegetmeiers' Poultry Book, London*, 1867.

"I never had claimed to be the 'founder,' or 'originator,' of *any* 'Brahmas.' I simply said I was the first breeder of the 'Gray Shanghaes' in America (never 'Cochins'), such as I sent to the Queen in 1852," &c.—*G. P. Burnham, in all the Poultry papers*, 1874.

"The *single* comb would appear to be the *usual* form of that feature in the Brahmapootra fowl; though, as Dr. Bennett says, 'the *true* breed do *sometimes* present this *deviation* of the pea-comb.'" (Sometimes!)—*Rev. Mr. Wingfield's Poultry Book, p.* 176; *published in* 1853.

"Upon this point, *I* can only say that out of twenty chicks bred for myself from a cock and two pullets obtained from Dr. Bennett, of the United States (of the Light Cornish-Chamberlin stock), *I* cannot detect a single instance of the 'deviation' from the *single combs upon the parents*, received from Dr. Bennett."—*Rev. Wm. C. Gwynne, England, to Rev. Mr. Wingfield, in* 1853.

"Mr. R. H. Bowman's chickens, of Rosemoran, which he bought of Mrs. Hozier Williams," sent to her in England by Dr. Bennett & Co., in 1852, out of the Chamberlin stock, "are of uniform

birds, his famous well-known *Dark* Brahma cock, for two years a leading English prize bird known as 'Champion,' and the Dark hens as we see them now," the most notable strain of *Dark* Brahmas to-day in all England! — *Lewis Wright's new "Illustrated Poultry Book;"* 1873, '74.

"I *did* notice the pea-comb on my first birds. It was not so with *all*; yet it appeared different from the Chittagong. *There was a tendency to throw* DARK *chickens*, but a greater tendency to become lighter. All fowls having dark and light feathers can be varied *either* way, to darker *or* lighter, by choosing always the darkest or lightest for breeders. *I* never bred to either extreme." — *Virgil Cornish's second letter, "Brahma Fowl," p.* 143.

"The statement that the two varieties of Brahmas (Light and Dark) had 'distinct origins,' is known to every breeder of these fowls to be untrue. Miss Watts, whose (Chamberlin's) strain is probably the *only* English one that has not been crossed, assured us, in the most distinct manner, that she never had but the *one* stock, from which, by selection, she has bred both the *Dark* and the *Light*" varieties. — *Wright's latest work, p.* 246. — "*Illustrated Book of Poultry.*"

"We have found in our own yards that we could soon breed *black* 'Brahmas,' if such were desired; or, on the other hand, that in about three seasons, by choosing the lightest birds, we could produce almost clear white. And as the *original* birds (Burnham's, of course,) were somewhat *darker* than the Light birds *now* shown, either color could have been bred from them (the originals) with still greater rapidity and ease." . . . "Burnham claims for *his* the credit of being the original birds,* and unfortunately found in England what he never could in America, a writer who would adopt his tale."— *Wright's Illustrated "Poultry Book,"* 1873, *p.* 247.

"As an instance of the general appreciation of this man, we had recently an announcement from a valued American correspondent that 'our old friend, Burnham, has let himself out again;' and were somewhat perplexed by this enigmatical information, until the receipt of 'Burnham's New Poultry Book,' published in 1871. It is the simple fact, that not one American writer, and but one English, ever regarded Burnham's accounts as of any value." . . . "Whether the latter may have bred very tolerable *imitations* of Brahmas, is not the question. We had seen that there were two qualities of birds known in the early days — one spurious, which bred mongrel progeny, and could be traced to Burnham; the other pure, which was always traced to Connecticut, or to Dr. Bennett, who procured his from that State."

* I *did* enter my claim, in the early days (long before Mr. Lewis Wright began to seek for means to abuse and cry down my fowls, which were so justly popular in England), as the "originator" of the *Gray Shanghae* stock, which I sent to Her Majesty the Queen, and others, in England, as well as all over the United States, AS SUCH. I did *not* claim to originate, breed or sell, own or keep, any "Brahmapootras" in those years. nd none know this fact better than do Mason C. Weld and Lewis Wright! — G. P. B.

color — *a dusky gray*, striped with black on head, neck, and back." Dr. Bennett wrote to Dr. Gwynne in 1852, that "*his* fowls and *Mr. Burnham's* were precisely similar, and both were bred from the same stock" (the Gray Shanghaes). — *Rev. Mr. Wingfield's Book*, 1853.

"Among Americans, Mr. Burnham says, these fowls are *Shanghaes*. Dr. Bennett (and Cornish) contends that they came from *India*. One says the *pea-comb* is decidedly preferable; the others say it should be *single*, upright, and well serrated. This 'pea-comb' is a *novelty* with us in England; and, in all our various *crosses*, we have never seen anything like this." — *Tegetmeier's London Illustrated Poultry Book*, 1867.

"Mr. Burnham's Light Brahmas, with pure white or cream-colored bodies, and elegantly pencilled hackles, were in great favor" (at the Birmingham Show, in '53), "when suddenly a *new* variety sprang upon the scene. A pair of birds from Mr. Burnham were shown there by Mr. Baily of London, and sold for 100 guineas! They were *Dark* gray in color, and were the *first* 'Dark Brahmas' ever seen in this country." — *W. B. Tegetmeier, Editor of "London Field," in* 1853.

The *Dark* Brahmas sent out to England first by Mr. Burnham, in 1853, "at once took the lead of all others, and many fanciers in England were supplied. But, wishing to 'improve' them, if possible, in size and color, these old sagacious breeders *crossed the hens with the black breasted Dorking*, the only bird which would give the qualities desired. A gentleman who visited those old establishments, a few years after the first birds were sent there from the United States (Burnham's), was in time to detect this cross; and at once observed the change in size, the *black breast*, and actually saw the fifth toe." — *Mark Pitman, in "New York Poultry Bulletin," in* 1870.

"Our readers will find a contribution in this week's 'Fancier's Journal,' over the signature of S. J. Bestor, Esq., the well-known fancier and writer — on '*Wright* vs. *Burnham*.' Mr. Bestor is a gentleman, a well-known old breeder, of Hartford, Conn., and well read; for two years president of the Connecticut State Poultry Society."

Wade's Philadelphia Fancier, June 26, referring to the following article: —

"I am not personally acquainted with Mr. Burnham, never having met him; but have read *all* of his works, and especially his later contributions to the press. He shows very clearly that *no* ship 'arrived at New York from Luckipoor, in India,' either in **1846** or in **1849**, as is claimed; and it does strike me that Mr. Wright has seriously erred in his theory about the origin of the now so-called 'Brahmas;' and he has plainly made a gross mistake in his attempts to argue Mr. Burnham out of the deserved credit of *originating* this stock in America, and of being the *first* to introduce it into England, of both Light and Dark varieties. Wright went a long stretch out of his way to implicate Mr. Burnham in Brahmapootraism. Mr. Burnham has recently completely vindicated him-

"But such, and accounts of such, published after the pure Brahmas were publicly shown, cannot invalidate a consistent account given from the very first of the genuine strain, as Mr. Cornish justly argues. It is plain that there was a strain of real Brahmas distinct from Shanghaes, or the fowls *then* known in America as Chittagongs, all which were traced up to the birds brought into Connecticut by Mr. Chamberlin." . . . "And as an aged East Indian officer writes us recently, that 'this fowl was the *Chittagong* breed, of which he had seen hundreds in India.' . . . Mr. Cornish's stock *might*, of course, have been Shanghaes as much as Burnham's were. We have seen that the *Dark* Brahma can be bred from the *Light*—or, rather the *Gray!* And on this and other evidence, we contend that the fowl is of *one race*. . . . We assert that all the evidence we have, traces this fowl back to Mr. Cornish's stock, and all the facts harmonize with this theory."—*Wright's "Brahma Fowl," last London edition.*

☞ "A portion of Mr. Cornish's letter of 1852, not quoted in the 'Poultry Yard,' (at first) states that *Chamberlin brought his fowls into the State* (Connecticut) *in the early part of* **1849**."—*Wright's "Brahma Fowl," p.* 17.

☞ "The name of the port from which the ship sailed, with these fowls on board, is Luckipoor, in India. *The ship arrived in New York, in September,* **1846**. The *first* brood I purchased."—*Cornish's second letter,* 1869, *p.* 143, *same work.*

☞ "The first pair of these fowls were brought by one Charles Knox to Mr. Chamberlin, in Hartford, Conn., in **1847**. Mr. Knox reported *two* pairs, on an East-India vessel, at New York."—*The latest account, by C. C. Plaisted, in* 1874.

"The Brahma and the Shanghae (Cochin) fowl being confessedly *closely-related* races, it is interesting to estimate their relative antiquity. The pea-comb has been found on the Malay, and on the China fowl. The importance of this matter, with regard to the whole subject of the *origin* of this species, must be our apology for devoting so much space to it." . . . "While it is *possible* the 'Dark' birds, which came over in the ship* *with* those here recorded, may have also been Brahmas, there is not the slightest reason to question that both *may* have been derived from the one stock brought into Connecticut by Chamberlin, and afterwards fostered by Cornish and Dr. Bennett!!!"—*Wright's "Brahma Fowl."*

"Chamberlin's name is Nelson H." says *Cornish.* "I purchased his first brood, hatched in August, 1847, and the old pair the April following." This testimony, so full and explicit, must be considered finally to settle the question. Mr. Cornish's direct and explicit evidence is the strongest point in this case. . . . "I will only say that the difficulty in my mind is, the plain, definite, accurate statements of Mr. Virgil Cornish, on this subject."—*Lewis Wright in "Brahma Fowl," and in a letter to G. P. Burnham in May,* 1874.

self against the wholesale attack of Mr. Wright, who, evidently, is *not* as 'F. R. W.' has it, 'the best living authority upon this Brahma question,' however good he may have been on other poultry matters. As to the sailor's tale about the 'importation' of Cornish's stock 'from Luckipoor, in India,' Mr. Burnham effectually disposes of *that*—since no record of this ship's arrival in New York is to be found; which it could now be readily, upon the old United States Customs Register, had it occurred either in **1846** or in **1849**. The result of all is, undoubtedly, that all these 'large Light-Gray Fowls' come from *one* parentage; and there is no question in my mind to-day, that *Mr. Burnham had the first old birds in the United States,* to wit: those he imported in **1849** and **1850**, from Shanghae; and that this splendid stock (now improved by long domestication among us) was originally of CHINESE, and not of *India* origin, as Mr. Tegetmeier so clearly states."—*S. J. Bestor, in Wade's Philadelphia Fancier, June,* 1874.

"Mr. Cornish *first* announces in Wright's book that his fowls came into Connecticut from the sailors of the *India* ships, in **1849**. On pages 142, 143, same work, appears Cornish's *second* letter (Nov. 9, 1869), stating that his fowls arrived in a ship from Luckipoor, *India,* at New York, September, **1846**. In June, 1874, Mr. Plaisted says, these fowls came into Connecticut from an East *India* ship, just then arrived at New York, in **1847**. In 1870, I went to New York, and carefully searched the United States Customs Records for this ship; and I now positively state that there is *no* entry of *any* such ship to be found there—either in **1849**, **1846**, *or* **1847**."—*G. P. Burnham, in "Turf, Field, and Farm," June* 26, 1874.

"Mr. Burnham clearly points us away back to Dr. Kerr's letters, in **1849**, in support of his claim to the *origin* of the Gray Shanghaes—now called 'Brahmas;' and there can no longer be any doubt, from all the evidence before the public, that these Light-Gray Fowls had a common origin in *this* country; and that they have been, since **1850**, **'51**, **'52**, variously *named* by different parties to suit their own tastes. We will add that, as far back as in 1855, '56, we ourselves bred these fowls in Massachusetts. They were then known as 'Gray Shanghaes,' or 'Chittagongs,' and, as we recollect them, they were certainly *identical* with the Light Brahmas of to-day."—*Editor Fanciers' Journal, Philadelphia, in* 1874.

"I would ask what Cornish's accounts are worth, from first to last? I do not consider his stories worth one pin, after investigating the subject as I have. There is nothing accurate in his *first* statement, and his *last* one is still worse. Mr. Cornish did *not* purchase Mr. Chamberlin's first brood of chickens, neither did he *ever* own the old 'first pair' of those fowls at any time, as I can prove to the satisfaction of the most incredulous."—*C. C. Plaisted in his Brahma History, Hartford "Poultry World,"* 1874.

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* "Dark birds which came over," in *what* ship? The one that "arrived at New York," in **1849**? or **1846**? or in **1847**? There was *no* such ship arrived from India as is claimed by Wright—in either year—with either "Dark birds," or Light! "The Brahmas originated *not* in India," says Mr. Tegetmeier, of the London "Field," "but with Mr. G. P. Burnham, in America," *both* varieties.

Dr. Bennett wished to change the *original* cut of his three birds, and "remove" the top-knots. I never would allow this block to be touched. He endeavored still to enlist me in his "Brahmapootra" scheme; but I steadily declined, and strove to show him how unreasonable was his pretensions about this Cornish-sailor story which *he* had hatched up; and I heard no more of this then skilfully prepared yarn (very slightly varied, to the best of my remembrance, in its details), until it was first made public, a year or more subsequently to this interview between us. Dr. John C. Bennett, himself, prepared this sailor-story in the main, *originally;* he alone *invented* the name of "Brahmapootra" for the Gray-Shanghae fowls; he also originated the title of the "pea-comb." The other parties in the Brahmapootra interest in 1852, '53 joined the Doctor in this story and the deception about the "importation of these fowls from *India*," — under his lead, — and subsequently told his tale so many times, that some of them (not all!) came at last to believe in its truth.

I have now upon file upwards of a score of the Doctor's old confidential letters, from which I could, if it were necessary, quote overwhelming corroborative "testimony," written by *his* hand, in support of the above declarations. But John C. Bennett is in his grave. He was my intimate friend for more than twenty-five years. He never wrote or uttered one offensive word to, or of, me or mine, to my knowledge. He possessed first-class natural talents, was liberally educated, and proved himself a genial, companionable man, though he was a sharp competitor in the chicken fancy, and oftentimes eccentric, reckless, and erratic in his business management. But I have nothing to offer derogatory to him; and his memory will hereafter be no farther criticised by *my* pen. Were he alive to-day, he would cordially indorse what I have now stated — as I have the means of *knowing*. And here let *him* rest.

If, then, this mythical "one pair of gray fowls" were *not* "imported," and there does not, and never has existed down to this day the slightest particle of real evidence that they ever came from India (as Mr. Tegetmeier so distinctly averred in 1867), what becomes of Mr. Lewis Wright's elaborated and long-spun straining to prove what the originators of this foolish story first fabricated? Of what mortal use is all this reiterated misrepresentation — first or last? What has Weld gained by the "firing off of his long string of questions" at Cornish, except to stultify his own witness, when he makes him repeat the details of this long-ago-played-out falsity?

And let me ask, here, Mr. Wright, where you first got your "*Dark* Brahmas" from, in Great Britain? Did Mr. Cornish, Mr. Chamberlin, Mr. Plaisted, Dr. Bennett, Mr. Knox, Mr. Weld, Mr. Anybody, *except* Mr. Burnham (whom you so wantonly vilify), *ever* send to England any Dark Brahmas, that you ever heard of, in those years you have written about so flippantly? Can you name *any* other American who sent to England, from 1852 to 1861 (when the rebellion broke out in the United States), the first specimen of "Dark Brahma" fowls of *any* strain, whatever? No, sir! You can *not*. None of these "up-the-Brahmapootra-River men" have ever had any thing to say about the *Dark* Brahmas, in the years you have written of so disgracefully in your two late books? No one but *you*, Lewis Wright, has ever undertaken to show that "*both* the Light and the Dark varieties may have been derived from the one stock," or that "it is *possible* the 'Dark' birds which came over in the ship with those recorded by you, may also have been Brahmas!"

You know very well that no one ever pretended that there was but "*one* gray pair, the others being red and brown," brought by the mythical ship into New York. But there was no such ship came over, as you and they claim! Therefore, there could have been no such "Brahmas," of *any* color. And, least of all, any "*Dark*" Gray ones. This declaration of yours, at the close of your book on the origin of the two varieties of the Brahmas, simply exposes your wilful ignorance of this whole subject. I originated the *Dark* Brahma fowl in my own yard, at Melrose, Mass., Lewis! You ought to know this, for all England and America knows it. Nobody ever claimed or pretended to take precedence of me, with *this* variety, surely. And even the Cornish-Bennett men have never set up any theory upon *this* point, regarding *their* stock. The *Dark* Brahma, or Dark "Gray Shanghae," *is my patent*, Mr. Wright. I originated it, in 1853. I never saw them till that year, but it was the result of a studied experiment of mine; and I raised a great many of these fine Dark birds in the succeeding years. Look over the records, and see if you can find any "*Dark* Brahmas" spoken of — anywhere on earth — until my first splendid trio went out to John Baily of Mount Street, London, in 1853. And tell me too, if, *subsequently*, at any time before the war, any body *but* G. P. Burnham of the United States sent to England *one single specimen* of this Dark variety, to any living man. You can't name him, Sir! He doesn't exist. Nobody had that stock but myself, in all those years.

Observe, Lewis, I am not now *arguing* this question. I am stating facts, simply. And "facts are stubborn things," you know. *I* make no mention of what "might have been," or what was "possible." I tell you that *I originated,* upon my premises, the fowl known from the outset (in this "history" you have so distorted and perverted) as the "Dark Brahmas," in the year 1853. And you nor no other man living can go behind, or before me, in *this* matter, as the record clearly shows. No one, save yourself, has ever questioned this. No American breeder has ever pretended that he has ever bred *Dark* birds from the so-claimed Cornish-Chamberlin-Bennett stock. From my "Gray Shanghae" fowls, the Light and Dark birds (in *my* own way), I produced the Dark Brahmas (so called) which I shipped to England, and bred hundreds upon hundreds of, subsequently, which I sent there and all over this country. Your people have, since 1864, '65, bred some fair "Dark Brahmas," as they call them; but never a pair that equalled *mine,* that I have ever yet seen.

And, notwithstanding all this truth, which you must have been cognizant of when you penned your two abusive volumes, you give me no credit for having done in this business what *no* man else has ever claimed to have done, before or after me! Is this justice? Is it fair? Is it generous? Is it honorable? Is this kind of treatment towards a man you never saw, and whom you can know nothing of, pursuing a manly course of conduct "in the fear of God?" It may be so, in your warped opinion; but *I* should say you penned these sentences with the Fiend at your elbow.

How did I *do* this? No matter; I did it! I produced a strain of dark-plumed birds which you, in England, never saw until I sent them there, and since 1858 and '59 which you have been striving to imitate; but which you have not yet succeeded in reproducing like the originals, because you have not gone about your experiments in the right way. There were *no brown feathers* and no "*vulture hock*" in *my* "Dark Brahma" or Dark-Gray Shanghae blood; but in *all* the English "Dark Brahmas" we have had here, this *brown* feathering and hock are found (to a greater or less extent), in *every* bird, male or female that I have examined, which has come from your side of the Atlantic in the past six or seven years. There is *no* exception to the cropping out of this defective color in your English dark birds — cocks and hens alike. Therefore, I repeat it, you don't breed them aright.

Turn to the English Dark Cock, page 86. His monstrous tail and fearful hock would disqualify him at once under the scrutiny of an American expert! We have attended no exhibition in the last five years where we have not seen scores of Dark Brahma cocks that would beat this sample, out and out, — supposing it to be a likeness; and Weir is generally very faithful in his delineations, as we all know. We insert the picture, therefore, more by way of warning, than otherwise; and, as in the instance of the large *Light* Brahma English bird, on page 121, we say emphatically, "none of *these* styles of Brahmas for us." They are not *the* thing at all. They are an English manufactured bird, altogether. We have seen numerous Dark samples that have been "imported" into America in the last half-dozen years, not unlike this, — with the exception of the shockingly deformed tail, — and we never saw one of them yet, in the body-plumage of which *we* could not detect the brown or bay feathering (to a greater or less extent), which comes from a *cross* with the Partridge or Dark-Cinnamon Cochin fowl, while the chickens bred from these English importations, *invariably* upon the pullets, in fluff, saddles, and sides, are spotted with the brown or foreign feathering; and the young cocks bred from such stock, almost as invariably, are similarly blemished in plumage upon the thighs and flanks. The pure *steel-gray* (white and black) of my originals is lost, or thus clouded, and American purchasers of these costly birds wonder why it is that they cannot get good colored progeny from their expensive English importations! It is simply because they don't breed them there as they were at first bred; and as they can *only* be bred, *in their purity*. In reference to which point, Lewis Wright, after arguing through page upon page, in his late work, in favor of this true *color* test, concludes with this vagary: "Mr. Teebay strongly dissents from our view, and believes there *must* have been another original strain (besides the so-called Cornish), to produce the dark variety." . . . But "we think little of this 'color' test!" A final announcement by Wright, which will unquestionably be fully appreciated by American fanciers, who know that the clean, pure, steel-gray Dark Brahmas have *never* been bred in this country from *any* strain save my originals. No American Light Brahma breeder to-day claims that he can produce the *dark* birds from what is called the "Cornish-Chamberlin strain," though Wright states that this has been done in England. I deny *this*, too. It has never been done, and it *can't* be done, with the light stock alone. This is simply impossible.

In continuation of what he knows about this breed, Mr. Wright says, "Both Dark and Light varieties of the Brahma fowl should be *precisely alike*, in size, shape, and carriage — differing only in *color*." And then, to prove his opinion that both varieties come out of one parent-stock, he adds, that "Mr. Joseph Hinton, whose experience goes back to the early days, informs us that his birds were originally *Light* Brahmas, obtained of Dr. Gwynne, Dr. Bennett, & Co. Later, he obtained a somewhat darker cock from J. K. Fowler (also an early breeder), from which, with his darkest of the Light hens, he bred a most beautiful *Dark* Brahma cock, and hens so densely dark as to be nearly *black*." Which latter statement merely repeats our own experience; since Mr. J. K. Fowler's Dark bird mentioned, I am quite positive went to England from *my* yard, in Melrose, and Dr. Bennett first supplied Dr. Gwynne and Mr. Hinton from my stock direct, I know, with the *dark*-plumed birds.

It is clear, Mr. Wright, you can know nothing of me, except through some malicious busybody who may have slandered me. And I repeat it, I am at a loss to understand *why* you should have thus villainously lampooned me. For four years, I find (since your *first* volume was issued) I have remained almost in ignorance of the existence of this libel! I had only casually heard that "Mr. Wright was down on Mr. Burnham in his Brahma Fowl," and never gave the matter a thought further; till, in the month of May, 1874, the subject was forced upon my notice by the publication of the long abusive extract from your books, inserted from an anonymous scribbler in a Philadelphia paper. Since *then*, I have endeavored to defend myself, though I am "on the shady side of life" in years, and know full well that I cannot do this so vigorously, perhaps, as I once could. But I am an old man now! It may be, upon examining the extracts I have presented upon pages 158 to 161, of this volume, that you will change your conclusions. It may be *not!* It is idle for you to assume, as you do in your letter to me in May, 1874, that you "did the best you could with the evidence upon this subject that was accessible to you," or that "you relied upon the statements of Mr. Virgil Cornish, publicly made," *prior* to 1870, upon which your atrocious theory is based; inasmuch as, up to the date of Cornish's *personal* letter to you, in 1871, you very well know that *he* had never once mentioned my name, or my fowls, in his letters published. The malicious *animus* of your rodomontade against *me*, thrusts itself out offensively in every page of your two books *previously* written; when, up to that

period, you cannot find the slightest ground in *Cornish's* "evidence," to implicate me, in any way whatever in this miserable business, of which *you* have at last gratuitously involved me, or attempted to entangle me, so unrighteously.

In all candor let me say, in the language of another, that "misrepresentations unwittingly made may possibly be construed as simple manslaughter; but deliberate falsehood, persisted in, with the light of truth before us, can only be accounted downright murder, with malice aforethought." And if this axiom be inapplicable to your case, I am not a judge of the course you have so causelessly pursued towards me, in the "*Brahma Fowl, a monograph,*" enlarged upon and extended, insufferably, in the otherwise presentable pages of your last quarto, the "*Illustrated Book of Poultry.*" Why pile up the agony, as you have done, in this *later* volume? Was your splenetic disposition unsatiated with the abuse you had voluntarily heaped upon my unoffending head in that *first* work? Could you not be content with putting forth edition after edition of *that* scurrilous volume, but you must fill your later ponderous tome with the venomous shafts of your spleen directed at poor me — in page after page of slanderous speculation and bosh, about "Burnham this," and "Burnham that?"

In view of all the unjust and plainly malicious vituperation and slander thus concocted by you, in your two recent books, backed by the far-fetched "testimony" furnished by your officious friend Weld (whom I never before heard of), I am forced to the conclusion that you have heaped up this calumny and abuse most causelessly and recklessly. Without a show of foundation for your ill-conceived and basely considered assault, you have thus wantonly vilified a man, who has for thirty years striven to the best of his power, assiduously and steadily to improve and advance the interests of the poultry fraternity; and who has succeeded — as you cannot deny — in accomplishing some small share of good in this direction, first and last.

You are welcome to all the "pleasure and benefit" this "labor of love"(?) on your part "has yielded you." But if, in your retired hours, you reflect upon the evil calumnies you have put forth thus inconsiderately, embodying the groundless assaults you have made upon me, therein, so totally uncalled-for and so unreasonably indited, under *any* view of the facts in the case — I doubt not the "still small voice" that has its home in the breast of every *honest* man whom God has furnished with ordinary powers of reason, will suggest to you that you have, in this instance, committed a grievous wrong

towards an inoffending fellow-man, that you will not live long enough to set aright. No one ought to know better than yourself that an uttered falsity is like the cut of a sabre, — the wound may heal, but the scar remains!

Turn you, now, Lewis Wright, to the preface of your "Brahma Fowl," and read *these* lines, penned by you in the early editions of that work — which, I observe, you (or your publishers) have *expunged* from the preface of your third edition!

"We do assert that even the poultry-fancy may be carried on in the reverent spirit of earnest work, and that we know some who are really seeking in this way, not alone to amuse their leisure, but in the fear of God to benefit the community, of which they form a part. . . . We have thought it worth while to give time, and thought, and labor, even to a book about 'nothing but *Brahmas.*'" (It certainly would have been nearer the truth, had you here stated 'a book about nothing but Burnham!') "We can truly say it has been a labor of *love* (*!!*) and it has yielded to ourselves both pleasure and benefit in many, many ways."

These are commendable sentiments — though, under all the circumstances, to *my* mental olfactories, in your case, they "smell strongly of the shop." Why are these sentences left out of your latest London edition, which I received but a few weeks ago? Those words were about the best in your book! Restore them, in your next edition — and leave out the heaped-up abuse of "Burnham," that disgraces so many *other* pages of that volume.

"The worm you tread on will turn to bite," in his poor way. I am not a worm, but I have been forced by your malignant assaults upon me, into this ungracious and unjust quarrel; and I leave the public to judge if I am the aggressor in this contest.

At all events, in closing these pages I feel assured in my own mind that those who will take the trouble to examine the overwhelming evidence I have in this volume presented, touching your baseless theory and discourteous treatment of me, in your two recent elaborate poultry books, will decide *justly* between us; and I do not fear the judgment that will now be accorded by the intelligent, unbiassed reader, upon the question, Is Geo. P. Burnham *right* in this controversy, or is Lewis Wright clearly and reprehensibly *wrong?*

THE END.

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